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THE
BOOKMAN

SPIRITUAL ADVENTURES IN PARIS

BY ARTHUR SYMONS

ALWAYS, if I can conceive myself under this image, I have lived as a solitary soul lives in the midst of the world. Writing on Walter Pater I said: "He was quite content that his mind should keep as a solitary prisoner its own dream of the world; it was that prisoner's dream of a world that it was his whole business as a writer to remember to perpetuate." It is Pater who said of Leonardo da Vinci: "Yet he is so possessed by his genius that he passes unmoved through the most tragic events, overwhelming his country and friends, like one who comes across them by chance on some secret errand." As for myself, I have never known what it was to have a home, as most children know it; a home that one has lived in so long that it has got into the ways, the bodily creases, of its inhabitants, like an old, comfortable garment, warmed through and through by the same flesh.

When I think of Baudelaire, and of Verlaine whom I knew, the same sinister sense creeps over me that these, also, were condemned to a kind of perpetual wandering. The artist, it cannot be too clearly understood, has no more part in society than a monk in domestic life: he cannot be judged by its rules, he can be neither praised nor blamed for his acceptance or rejection of its conventions. Social rules are made by normal people for normal people, and the man of genius is fundamentally abnormal.

It is perhaps for these reasons, and because I have a passion for discovery, that during the May and June of this year I spent in Paris, I set myself to the task of discovering, as far as I could during that time, exactly where Verlaine and Baudelaire used to live. I was more fortunate in finding the dwellings of Baudelaire than those of Verlaine. Still, when I was in the Latin Quarter, I came on a queer long narrow street, that turns off abruptly on the left of the Boulevard Saint Michel, Rue Monsieur le Prince. Verlaine lived there for some time in the Hôtel du Perron, 21—a street Augustus John also lived in—that gives

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on la Rue Antoine-Dubois; the hotel is situated at the angle of these streets. As for l'Hôtel des Mines, 125 Boulevard Saint Michel, its aspect was not much changed; only there was no courtyard; outside, I saw "Installation Moderne".

I have before me as I write my visiting card on which Verlaine wrote in pencil in 1890: "Paul Verlaine, hôtel des Mines, 125 Bd St. Michel, Chambre No. 4." He gave it to me in the Café François Premier, which I find has changed its name and become Café Mathieu. I went in and sat at a table not far from the centre table where Verlaine was to be found, night after night, for I know not how many years; and, no absinthe being available, I contented myself with a cup of bad coffee.

And, as I sat there, watching the strange people who came in and out, and the people who passed along the pavement, I evoked this vision: the vision of May, 1890. Verlaine had asked me to call on him next night at his hotel. Next night I went there, and asked the concierge if No. 4 was at home. She looked at me grimly, jerked her head away, and said, "Non, Monsieur, il n'est pas ici." I turned away and soon came on Verlaine, who began to talk with an emphasis that became terrible when he had been drinking too long. We crossed the court and began to climb a narrow staircase. Verlaine mounted step by step, haltingly; the room, when we entered it, was small and mean, but quite decent. His talk that night was explosive and argumentative; his face worked frantically; then he said he must go out—he had some business; there were all manner of compliments on both sides, and the little man—who was Bibi-la-purée—lighted me down the dark stairs with a candle.

It is in the recently printed letters of Baudelaire to his mother that he reveals confessions so heartbreaking, so agonizing, so desperate, so ghastly, and so wonderfully tragic that, after this, his incapability of finishing his *Mon Coeur mis à nu,* seems natural; which (to quote Poe's words) "no man could write, even if he dared. The paper would shrivel and blaze at every touch of the fiery pen." Take, for instance, these sentences, in one of his letters, which only a fiery pen could have written: "Last week I had to go and sleep for two days and nights in a hideous little hotel because I was spied on: I went out without any money for the simple reason that I had none."

With his incurable restlessness, his incurable desire of change, Baudelaire is always moving from one place to another. A certain number of his various residences I discovered in June: and this, roughly, is the list of them: Quai de Béthene, 10, Isle Saint Louis; Rue Vanneau, Faubourg Saint Germain; Rue Varenne, Quai d'Anjou; Hôtel Pimodân, Quai d'Anjou; Hôtel Corneille; Hôtel Folkestone, Rue Lafitte; Avenue de la République, 95; Rue des Marais-du-Temple, 25; Rue Mazarine; Hôtel Voltaire, 19 Quai Voltaire; Rue de Seine, 52; Rue Pigalle, 60; Rue de Babylone; Rue Beautrellis, 22; Cité d'Orléans; Rue des Ecuries-d'Artois, 6; Rue d'Angoulême-du-Temple, 18; Hôtel Dieppe, Rue d'Amsterdam, 22; Rue de Seine, l'Hôtel du Maroc, 57.

Jeanne Duval, a kind of *mulâtresse* Baudelaire discovered in some café-concert in Paris in 1840, who was his mistress, was to him, I doubt not, simply a silent instrument that, by touching all the living springs of it, he awakened to a music that was all his own; a "masterpiece of flesh" that probably meant no more to him than "the empty kisses" of some Judith or

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Marguerite or Gabrielle. It is curious to note that in a letter written in 1842 he gives his address in this manner: "Chez Madame Duval, rue de la Femme-sans-Tête, 6."

On May 18, 1854 he writes: "I have just settled down, rue de Seine, 57, l'Hôtel du Maroc. I am delighted with being here: the charm of the humidity of a ground floor room in another hotel, of a cage opened to all kinds of noises, of a hateful environment, of incessant visits and finally of an infernal laziness, is broken. I am more than ever obliged to have money always on me, and to go out twice a day to have my meals." After crossing the Seine I found myself in the Rue de Seine; and discovered on the left l'Hôtel du Maroc, 57, an immensely fine old building in stone with iron balconies and arched stone triangles over the windows. There are five floors with "Sonnette de l'Hôtel", and a huge entrance hall: on the sloping roof there are four small attics. The hotel gives on Rue Jacob which, after a small triangular square, turns on the left to la Rue de l'Echaudé Saint Germain. As I stood there I heard, at the end of this narrow and sordid street, the harsh Parisian cry of a glazier. As Baudelaire lived on the top floor, that gives a wide view of the street and the passing of people below and of the sky and the clouds, and as he certainly heard from his window the same cry I heard, I give here an abridged version of his prose-poem "Le Mauvais Vitrier".

There are purely contemplative natures, purely creative, who all the same, under an unknown and mysterious impulse, often act with a rapidity they never imagined themselves capable of. I have several times endured these crises which makes me believe that the malicious Demon glides inside of us and makes us accomplish the most absurd actions.

One morning I got up, feeling sad and weary with mere laziness, and with the desire to do some great deed: and, unluckily, I opened the window. The first person I saw in the streets was a glazier whose piercing cry came up to me out of the foul Parisian atmosphere. It seems impossible to say why I was seized at the sight of this man with an abominable hatred. So I shouted down to him and asked him to come up. Finally he appeared on the landing of the top floor; and as I examined curiously his glasses, I said to him: "What? You haven't colored glasses, magical and paradisal glasses? How impudent you are!" And I pushed him hastily near the staircase, where he stumbled and grumbled.

I went up to my balcony and seized a flowerpot; and when the man appeared on the pavement outside the door of the hotel, I let fall my engine on him in a perpendicular manner; the shock making him fall backward, he managed to break under his back all his miserable itinerant wares. And, mad with my folly, I cried at him furiously: "How splendid is life!"

These various pleasantries are not without peril; but what matters the eternity of damnation to him who has found in a second an infinite joy?

L'Hôtel de Seine, 52 Rue de Seine, is a quaint and tall house, between equally tall houses; and these houses and others in the street lean over in much the same manner as the old houses in Coventry; these reminded me also of Holywell Street, with its narrow lane with overhanging wooden fronts, with its surreptitious shop windows, the glass always dusky, through which one dimly saw English translations of Zola among chemists' paraphernalia.

After finishing this sentence I took up "The Secret Agent" of Joseph Conrad, and found in these sinister sentences—written as he himself told me, in the same street that he passed through on his way from the Docks to the heart of London—exactly what I wanted.

The window of Mr. Verloe's shop contained photographs of more or less undressed dancing-girls; nondescript packages in wrappers like patent medicines; closed yellow envelopes, very flimsy, and marked two-and-six in heavy black figures; a few numbers of ancient French comic publications hung across a string as if to dry; a dingy china bowl, a casket of black

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wool, bottles of marking ink, and rubber stamps; a few books, hinting at impropriety; a few apparently old copies of obscure newspapers, badly printed, with titles like "The Torch", "The Gong"—rousing titles, and the two gas jets inside the place were always turned too low, either for economy's sake or for the sake of the customers. In the daytime the door remained closed; in the evening it stood discreetly but suspiciously ajar.

The street had a bad reputation, and by night doors opened and shut unexpectedly up dark passages. Perhaps that vague dubiousness added a little to its charm, but by day the charm was a positive one: the bookshops! Perhaps I liked the quays in Paris better: it was Paris, and there was the river, and Notre Dame, and it was the left bank. There was a vague smell of absinthe and bread outside the Hôtel de Seine; and, as I stood there, on the other side of the street there passed me a terrible negress: so symbolical of this sinister street and so symbolical of Baudelaire! There were four rooms on each floor, and from his room he must have seen wonderful cloud effects above these houses: he who cried: "J'aime les nuages, les nuages qui passent, là-bas, les merveilleux nuages!" And, as Rossetti sang, so might it be said of both Baudelaire and Rossetti,

> Only, gazing alone,
> To him wild shadows are shown,
> Deep under deep unknown
> And height above unknown height.

Baudelaire, after leaving (March, 1856) his rooms in the Rue d'Angoulême-du-Temple, found himself again facing the Seine in the Hôtel Voltaire; he arrived there in July and remained there for three years. Dining there, I found it an old-fashioned hotel, with a traditional past behind it; for in this hotel Baudelaire entertained Gautier, Wagner, Banville, Malassis, Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, Flaubert, Courbet, Manet, Delacroix. There he did some of his finest prose and at least three volumes of his translations of Poe.

But, what was most interesting for me in these wanderings, was my coming on what is now l'Hôtel Lauzan, built in 1657, 17 Quai d'Anjou; in Baudelaire's time it was known as l'Hôtel Pimodân. He entered into possession of his rooms in 1843; these, three of them, were just under the roof; and for these luxurious rooms he paid three hundred and fifty francs a year. The walls and ceiling of the room that was his bedroom and his study were covered with red and black wallpapers; there he had his books, manuscripts, pictures, his ancient work table, his wine and his liqueurs: and, above all, a magnificent view across the river, where he could see Notre Dame, and the Morgue.

One can imagine the fiery-hearted and inflammable Gascon, Duc de Lauzan, reveling in the palace he lived in; where, in fact, he died in 1723 at the age of ninety. It still remains a magnificent palace. It is huge in height, three stories high, with tall windows, small panes of glass, a rusty stone balcony supported by six windows on each floor. On the left of the door and on the right of the last window are splendidly colored iron posts, bright red and golden yellow and pale gold; near the first floor a big dragon with a golden head and scales of gold looks downward—he has a sinister jaw. The stone is blackened with age; there is a curiously old and huge courtyard, with stone decorations on all sides, so that the inner part of the building surrounds a square.

It was there that Gautier first met Baudelaire in 1849; he was then at the height of his passionate beauty, with his black hair and Spanish-tobacco eyes, his curled beard and moustache, his immense forehead, his iron-

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ical lips like the lips of Leonardo da Vinci's figures, his long and delicate nose whose palpitating nostrils drank in perfumes, his Oriental eyelids that added to the warmth of his flame-like eyes. "O rare", says Banville, "exemple d'un visage réellement divin, réunissant toutes les charmes, toutes les forces et les séductions les plus irrésistibles!" Only, as Gautier says, when Baudelaire's struggle for life and when the torture of his passions had changed what was primitive in his face, there remained a tragic mask, "où chaque douleur a mis pour stigmate une meurtrissure ou une ride".

I shall give here the most salient details of Gautier's description of l'Hôtel Pimodân, on a night when he had been invited to join certain mysterious men for his first experience of hashish. He comes on the hotel, and lifts the sculptured door handle; the old rusty wooden door is opened, he enters, traverses the courtyard which he finds (as I did) surrounded by ancient buildings under pointed gables; the interstices of the pavement are covered with grass. The tall windows with narrow panes that light the staircase shine; he finds himself at the bottom of one of those immense staircases constructed in the reign of Louis XIV; an Egyptian chimera holds a candle between its claws. The construction of these stairs shows the genius of the architect: there are pictures without frames along the walls and, on the top floor, he sees the design of a huge ceiling painted with frescoes. There, where Baudelaire and the others await him, he sees a door knocker covered with Utrecht velvet, shining and half shattered, whose yellow galloons and battered nails indicate the famous door. He enters and finds himself in a big room lighted at the other end with several lamps: as he enters this room he steps back into the atmosphere of three centuries. In that obscure room begins his initiation into the occult rites of the Demon Hashish.

It is lamentable to think how many things Baudelaire never did or never finished. To "cultivate one's hysteria" so calmly, and to affront the reader *(hypocrite lecteur, mon semblable, mon frère)* as a judge rather than as a penitent; to be a casuist in confession, to be a hermit of the brothel, to be so much a moralist with so keen a sense of the ecstasy of evil: that has always bewildered the world, even in his own country, where the artist is allowed to live as experimentally as he writes. Yet, when all comes to be said, Baudelaire, who wrote with all his nerves, this Romantic, this Decadent, has something classic in his moderation, a moderation which becomes at times as terrifying as Poe's logic.

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AZRAEL'S BAR

BY STEPHEN VINCENT BENET

HE stood behind the counter, mixing drinks;
Pride for the old, who like their liquor tart,
Green scorn frappé to cheer the sick-at-heart,
False joy, as merry as a bed of pinks.
He had the eyes of a sarcastic lynx
And in his apron was a small black dart
With which he stirred, secretive and apart,
His shaker, *till it rang with poisonous clinks.*

I fumbled for the rail. "The same, with gin?
Love—triple star—you like the velvet kick?"
I shook with the blind agues of the sick.
Then, through lost worlds, his voice, "*Fini*, old friend?"
He poured black drops out, cold as dead men's skin:
"So? This is what we always recommend—"

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CAER CARIAD

A Story of the Marches

BY MARY WEBB

IN the Red Valley were only two houses—that of Zedekiah Tudor, ferociously scarlet, and that of his God, coldly grey. The valley, bird-scorned since Zedekiah had lopped the trees and pleached the hedges, would have been mute but for the dark music of the weir, lamenting.

It was a bitter night when Zedekiah stood with Dinah, his wife, in the graveyard. They were hidden, except for occasional greenish moonlight, in inky gloom. When the moon tore suddenly through the driving wrack, the shadows of the graves seemed to Dinah to spring at her like creatures out of ambush. The wind drove down the valley, howling, and Zedekiah spoke even more loudly than usual.

"Woman, confess yer sin, by the chyild's grave!"

Dinah's face, floating up momentarily out of the darkness, quivered, looking in the moonlight like a green-tinted white flower on black water. She was afraid of Zedekiah and of his God, and of the ghostly child that had scarcely breathed and had attained for her superstitious mind in the last six months a kind of ghoulish entity. She dreaded hearing Zedekiah mention David, her lover, and tarnish with his thoughts her new, mysterious joy. Her look of anguish revealed, as such looks do, the depths of expression underlying her usual one, and Zedekiah might have seen that her love story was not on the plane he imagined. But, as the local pig-sticker, he could hardly be expected to indulge in the finer emotions; and being, as he said, outside prop and inside pillar of religion in the Red Valley, he knew that all men are vile, altogether born in sin.

"There wanna no sin, Zedekiah."

"Dunna lie. You were along of the man, yea, many a time, in the spinney."

"There wanna no fau't."

"If there'd a bin no fau't, what for did you go with 'un?"

Dinah was silent. How could she explain what was mysterious even to herself—mysterious and wildly sweet? How could she show Zedekiah that David was her spirit's young companion, lover of that remote self in her which dwelt, silent and hitherto alone, far beyond the little noise of daily life? Even if she could have expressed these things, how could Zedekiah understand David? For David was one of those changelings sometimes found in hard, respectable, prosperous communities. He had an eager brain, emotions, a love of beauty, belief in impulse. He had shaken himself free of views such as Zedekiah held on re-

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ligion, sex, and money. In the new, thrilling intimacy of the last two months there had simply been no time for the things that Zedekiah suspected. She realized wearily that it was no use trying to explain.

"In times gone by you'd a stood in a sheet for it, a woman as was a sinner."

"We on'y wanted to be together, Zedekiah; we'm clemmed each for other. And it inna our fau't as David come too late, if he'd a come when you did, I'd a chose him."

This quiet putting of him in a lower scale than David enraged Zedekiah. It was a blow to his vanity that he never forgave.

"You'd follow the wastrel like a bitch," he snarled.

She crouched on the grave, cowed, as are all sensitive temperaments, by the unbelievable coarseness and crassness of the world. She knew suddenly that her one desire was to follow David to the world's end, that so she would attain holiness. Yet how could that be, since she would be breaking the laws of God and man?

Instinct told her that David was beautiful and good, Zedekiah ugly and evil. Impulse cried, "David!" across the waste places of her life. But tradition, herd-morality, were too strong for the new impulse. The night was dark, David absent, Zedekiah and his God imminent; and from the graves, threatening and grisly, she heard the dead preaching their dead creed. Superstition held its victim. She was bound to Zedekiah. She had married him because it was expected of her, and because the institution of marriage was the only respectable vocation open to her. On her wedding night she had feared him. When, at daybreak, satisfied and bland, he had recited the Magnificat, she had hated him. When her child was born she had cried out that it was a text and not a child that she was bringing into the world. When it died after three weeks she was not very sorry.

Zedekiah's voice rose harshly above the grievous water and the gentle sea-murmur of the larches in the spinney beyond the valley.

"Swear! Swear you'll ne'er see 'un agen in the face o' flesh!"

The water cried out like a soul in prison. It had come from afar; it journeyed into mystery; it chafed at the forbidding banks of Zedekiah's valley.

"Oh, I canna! I canna!"

"Swear or burn!"

"But there's nought wicked in giving David good-day."

"It wouldna be only good-day as you'd give 'un."

Dinah knew, with feminine shrewdness, that Zedekiah's words had a germ of truth, that some day the fire of physical love must leap up between her and David. This put her in the wrong. She had been brought up in the demonology that Zedekiah professed. She believed in his terrible devil, his yet more terrible God.

"Where their worm dieth not!" shouted Zedekiah. "Swear!"

She moaned. To her an oath was unbreakable, and her love for David was a fierce, primitive thing, as are all spiritual needs.

"It's not as *I* want you," said Zedekiah; "it's what the neighbors 'ud say; and the saving of your soul." He added this as an afterthought. "Here I am, ready to forgive the sin and take yer back."

"But I dunna want to come back! It's David I'm fond on."

The darkness hid the rage in Zedekiah's close-set black eyes.

"If you swear tonight," he said per-

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suasively, "you'll maybe save him as well."

Dinah thought of the town of heaven, full of people singing part songs without wrong notes or practice; she and David would be able, in the general stir, to slip away somewhere and be at peace. She joined the multitudes that sacrifice life to eternity.

"I swear!" she said, and slipped down in a heap on the cold, unfriendly little grave.

II

Dinah stood at the door of the Red House and looked down the valley. Nothing had changed, although forty-five years had passed over it since the wild night of her vow. Four more cold little graves had been added to the first, for Dinah's children had been still-born.

Zedekiah had let it be tacitly understood that they died because the Lord was angry with Dinah, and as Zedekiah was a religious man everyone believed him. So an impregnable wall of prejudice rose around Dinah, imprisoning her, shutting her away from sympathy. Every Sunday, in the house of their God, the small congregation eyed her stonily. Coming out on dark winter nights, it seemed to Dinah that the eyes of her unbreathing children followed her with the same sneering coldness as did the eyes of Zedekiah's grandmother, whose portrait (done in plentiful oils, and unforgivably like Zedekiah) hung in the parlor. Dinah watched this portrait every evening, when, with his small eyes shut and his long, inquisitive nose pointing toward the hearth-rug, Zedekiah prayed aloud that she might be forgiven, while the treetops in the spinney kept up their inward, promising music, all unheeded.

Zedekiah felt that he had been very forbearing with Dinah; he had never forgiven the wound to his vanity, and whenever she shrank from him he was silently furious. He expressed his anger in a scheme of daily petty tyrannies, under which Dinah grew yearly more feckless and spiritless, coming at last to believe that only by lifelong penitence could she save her soul. The house pressed upon her with its hideous comfort, and the water, clamant in the night, had a summoning tone. Ten years ago, she had been called "simple"; now she was openly spoken of as a *gwerian*. Zedekiah ceased to regard her as worthy of his supervision. Free for the first time, she began to wander. She was so mentally inert that she had a kind of kinship with inanimate things, and they began to murmur and mutter in her ears. She had lost the sanity of others, which had been her madness, and now that men called her mad she drew near to the patient reason of nature.

As she stood—a small, bent figure—in the pretentious doorway with its surrounding brickwork of yellow and red, she felt a stirring in her mind of something almost approaching to impulse. The April day was like the underside of a waterfall. Green rain was blown in glassy gusts along the blue lower slopes of the hills and through their far-flung shadows. Another green rain of soft needles hung in the larches, whose tops just showed above the high ground that closed the valley. It was as if they grew in a submerged country, an enchanted country lying deep in mist and magic. Dinah had not been to the spinney since her last meeting with David.

"I've a mind to go," she said to herself. She fetched her shawl and set off. The spinney, when she pushed the white wicket open and entered,

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dripped and burned with light. She wandered, mazed, into its heart, and saw how the soft golden chalices of the Lent lilies dipped and rose among their green spears—how they shone down the long slopes under the larches—how they caressed each other, flower on soft flower, sleek leaf on leaf. She gathered a handful and buried her lined face in them, breathing their vast, vague freshness—healing and tear-compelling—while all about her, with a hushed fairy clamor, the finches sang. It was then, brought by some green charm, that the full flood of madness—as the neighbors would have called it—came upon Dinah. Intuition was awake. She had unconsciously, by virtue of complete passivity, reached the state which the mystic attains consciously. And from the secret centre of the radiant day her message came. She, who had cowered so long, stood up straight in the ardent warmth; she gazed up into the pure, pale sky, and her grey eyes shone suddenly with love and joy. Then she spoke, and her voice, quavering but confident, dominated by its undernote of ecstasy the mysterious, lifting murmur of the treetops and the delicious hilarity of the finches.

"I be clemmed for David. I be going whome to David, and You can send me to the Bad Place if You'm a mind!"

There did not seem to be any criticism in the bright world—all made of amber and green and pale blue glass—as she left the spinney and set forth with a brave heart on her twenty-mile walk. She would find her way, she was sure, to the tiny cottage that was David's own, where he dwelt under the southern slopes of Caer Cariad. She knew exactly, for David had told her, how it looked and where it stood—long dreamed of, long desired.

By mossy tracks where primroses bloomed in bridal bouquets; through grave beech-woods transparently roofed with young leaves; over the quick, pointed grass that pricked up, thick and wet, through a powder of daisies with delicate elation; across the brown, rounded hills she passed, grotesque and sombre. When horses galloped or bullocks bellowed in roadside fields, her timid heart leaped fearfully, but she kept on.

What would David be doing when she got there? "Setting taters, likely," she thought. She wondered what he would say. It did not occur to her to wonder how he would look. In the late afternoon shadows she came, faint and stiff, to the brow of a hill overlooking a great stretch of country. Wind-tormented may trees embowered her. They were breaking into blossom, and their fresh green was jeweled with curd-white buds. She did not know that she herself, gnarled and stricken as their ancient trunks, outshone their budding promise by the sudden white flowering of her spirit. She was absorbed in contemplation; for there, across the Paradisal land that ran thick with evening's honey, standing in sweet and homely majesty on a crest of rose and pearl, was Caer Cariad. As she shaded her eyes she could see, nestling in its lower woods, a cottage, small and creamy as a hawthorn flower. It was far away indeed, but it was there, and it was David's. It beckoned her. Mile after mile the willing old feet trudged on. But now came the fear that always dogs fulfilled desire. Maybe David would not want her; he might be married, she had not thought of that. He might be gone away. To keep down the darkest thought of all she began to sing, and her cracked, plaintive voice sounded strangely in the gathering dusk.

It was dark when she climbed, sick

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with exhaustion, up the steep garden to the cottage door. The neglected borders, the windows, uncurtained and unlit, almost stopped her low pulses. Was there to be any welcome for her in the dark house? Was not the fire dead on the hearth, the singing-bird dead in the window?

She knocked and waited, while from the last purple summit of Caer Cariad the light lapsed.

Then, low and rich with promise of love past the bargaining loves of the world, there came on the quiet scented air the voice of David, the voice of the beloved—

"Come thy ways in!"

But when Dinah stood in the doorway she saw, not the David of her dreams, but an old man—white-haired and feeble—crouching over a low wood fire in a neglected and disordered room. And suddenly all the triumph of attainment, the joy of the imagined meeting, died within her.

"Life gone by!" she said, "and I met a been along of you. Life gone by!"

"Why, Dinah, my dear!"

David spoke soothingly. He asked no questions, showed no surprise. A sense of peace began to steal over Dinah. She surveyed the table, stacked with unwashed china; the grey ashes in the grate; the tiled floor—of a uniform mud-color; the grease-covered candlestick in which David had just lit the candle.

"You didna get married, then?"

"It dunna look much like it." David smiled humorously at his own expense. "I got on pretty tidy till I took ill," he explained.

"And never-a-one to do for you?" she asked, torn between the wish that he should have been comfortable and a fierce jealousy of any other woman who should have dared to look after him.

"I couldna take up with any but you, Dinah."

"An' now I've come and I'm only an ugly old ooman!" cried Dinah in misery.

"Dunna you dar' say it! And you wi' such pretty eyes! Didna I allus say you'd got pretty eyes?"

"Ah!"

The syllable expressed a whole world of content. There was no one else, and she was not ugly to him. All was well. Her eyes began to rove round the room possessively.

There crept into them the joy of battle, of creative art. Her fecklessness was gone, and excitement had overcome weariness.

"Afore I sleep," she announced, "I be going to clean the place, grate and quarries an' all. And I be going to wash up!"

She fell upon the disorder, and David, moving his chair from point to point, followed by the silently protestant cat, watched her with awed amusement. Never had an old woman worked with such fury, with such joy. She was laboring with her own hands for her beloved; she wanted no other Paradise. When at last, hours later, she brought the supper table to the hearth in the clean, firelit, toast-scented room, and they sat hand in hand contemplating the Lent lilies in a jampot, he said—

"The place be all a-blossom, my dear, now as you've come."

"I've broke the vow to come, lad, and I'll go to the Bad Place, but I dunna care."

"I'm thinking the only Bad Place is minding what we met a done each for other when it be too late," said David. "And I'm thinking Caer Cariad's a long way on to Paradise—a long way on it is."

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JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD AND HIS FAR NORTH

BY RAY LONG

AS a general rule writers and editors want to discuss anything but their work when they are on a holiday. Emerson Hough is fond of telling an incident of one of his trips into Alaska. He and his guide had made camp for the night. Emerson had relaxed beside the fire and was saying to himself, "Thank God I have finally found one place where no one is going to ask me for advice about writing." The guide, sitting on the opposite side of the fire, was not relaxed. He was studying Emerson and waiting for a psychological moment. He decided it had come, and reached into the breast pocket of his shirt. "Mr. Hough," he said, "I wonder if you would mind giving me your opinion of some poetry I have been writing?"

I had a somewhat similar experience on a fishing trip, in the Rainy Lake Country. My guide was a remarkable, full-blooded Indian, with the extraordinary name of Thomas Linklader, and with a still more extraordinary Scotch accent. One sunset we were paddling back to camp trolling for muskallonge. The last thing in the world I was thinking of was magazines. I didn't even know that Thomas had any idea that I was in the magazine business. Thomas stopped paddling for a moment and said: "I am very much interested in a magazine published in your country, Mr. Long—a magazine called 'The Red Book'."

At that time I was editor of "The Red Book". Even my bitter dislike of talking shop when I was trying to get a strike could not overcome my curiosity. "And why are you interested in that particular magazine, Thomas?" I asked. "Because of some animal stories it is publishing," he answered. "They are by a man named Curwood. He knows animals as I know them. He must have spent much of his life in the forest. I have been reading his stories for quite a while and I have never found anything in any of them which did not agree with what I myself have observed, with the exception of one statement of his: he says that wolves will not swim; that they dislike the water too much. I know that wolves do swim, and you know that they do, because we have them on the island where we have our camp. They are always changing from one island to another. I couldn't understand why he made such a statement until I asked some questions of men who have been in the part of the north about which Mr. Curwood writes, and from them I found that the wolves up there are different from our wolves. Did you ever read any of this man's stories, Mr. Long?"

I tried to be modest in saying that I not only had read them, but that I was the editor who was publishing them, and that I really believed I had discovered James Oliver Curwood. As a

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matter of fact that statement wasn't quite true. Curwood had been publishing for quite a while before I made his acquaintance, but I think I was the first editor to see the tremendous possibilities in his keen insight into nature—both animal and human—and his quite extraordinary faculty for presenting an understanding and sympathetic picture of the far north, which is now our last line of romance on this continent.

My belief in Curwood's accuracy was based on my knowledge of the man and on my scant knowledge of wild animal life gained in short vacations. To have a man like Thomas Linklader confirm him meant more to me than confirmation from a dozen Stefánssons, for Thomas really knew his woods. He took me one day to the scene of a caribou battle, and from the footprints in the gravel by the shore of a stream reconstructed the entire fight. He could tell me with greater accuracy than any man I ever met in the north, just where we would find any particular kind of animal and any particular kind of fish. He absolutely knew what he was talking about.

I returned to my desk with still greater faith in Curwood, and from then on published practically everything he wrote. And I think I enjoy as much as he possibly can, the announcement that 105,000 copies of his latest novel, "The Valley of Silent Men", were sold before publication. For Curwood has come into his own. He has won a vast audience among novel readers as he long ago won a great number of magazine readers.

I was curious to see what effect this popular acclaim would have on Curwood. I think I have come to know him as well as one individual can know another. We have been on fishing trips in the hottest of hot weather, and we have gone picnicking with the thermometer thirty degrees below zero. I have visited him in his home, he has been a visitor in mine. I have roughed it with him in the wildest sort of country, and have seen him react to the "civilization" of the big cities. And in each of these varying circumstances he has been true to his individual philosophy of life. In other words, there is a fine strain of sincerity in the makeup of James Oliver Curwood that does not vary with varying conditions.

How then would he, and in consequence, his work, be affected by this clamorous public approval of his novels? The answer, I believe, may be found in this: Curwood used to turn out as many as two novels a year in addition to a couple of dozen short stories. They averaged up very well, too, as far as writing goes; his work indicated painstaking care. With the exception of "The Grizzly King", which many critics consider his best work, "The River's End" was the most effectively written of his novels. But today Curwood is writing one novel a year and very few short stories. And "The Valley of Silent Men" shows a distinct improvement—not only as to narrative and dramatic value, but in construction, development, characterization, and cumulative force.

As a matter of fact, Curwood was a little worried about the responsibilities of being a *best* best seller. Then he decided that a writer could be a true artist and reach a vast public. He cited the enormous following of Dickens, Stevenson, Conan Doyle, Kipling, Dumas, Mark Twain, whose stature is greater, and not less, because they reach the understanding of the masses.

Above all things, Curwood is sincere in whatever he writes; he is square in so many ways. I recall

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one visit to his home in Owosso, Michigan. We sat up late one night hatching plots for his "Nomads of the North". I suggested a situation that appealed to his imagination and we developed it for all it was worth. We both went to bed highly satisfied, and you can well imagine my surprise when he turned up at breakfast and told me the suggestion wouldn't do. He had gone to bed to lie awake all night long, and had finally determined that these animals would not be likely to do the things we had planned for the story. Not, mind you, that they *would not* but that it was not *likely* that they would.

James Oliver Curwood is a writing man because he has something to say, and he writes only of those things which he knows best. His novels are set in the far north region of Canada because he not only knows, but actually loves, that country. I think it is pretty generally known that Curwood was employed for two years by the Canadian government as an explorer and that he has lived among the Eskimos. But I am not sure whether the public is aware that he makes expeditions on his own initiative and at his own expense into the unexplored regions. These are thoroughly organized expeditions, too, requiring a pack train of twelve horses or more, in charge of Bruce Otto, the noted guide. Curwood and Otto remain on the trail for months at a time, "living off the land".

These periodic trips serve the double purpose of satisfying Curwood's craving for the wild places and of furnishing him with authentic material for his stories. In his own words, "I traveled three thousand miles up and down the mighty Saskatchewan before I wrote 'The River's End', and if I had not gone down the Athabasca, the Slave and the Mackenzie with the wild 'river brigades' of God's country, I would not have written 'The Valley of Silent Men'." Before writing "The Grizzly King" and "Nomads of the North" he lived three years with those noble animal characters—Thor, Muskwa, Neewa, and Brimstone, while "God's Country and the Woman" and "Kazan" were written in a cabin hundreds of miles from civilization.

Curwood's favorite place, however, for performing his literary labors, is in a spare room of the cottage he bought for his mother and father in Owosso. The furnishing of this room approximates the primitive equipment of his forest cabins. There is a stove, a kitchen table, an old sewing machine for his typewriter—and the typewriter itself.

He swears that he cannot write in his own home, one of the most interesting homes that I have ever seen. In it are twenty-seven guns, all of which have seen service—the stocks of most of them are scarred with notches recording his kills. And the place from cellar to garret is filled with mounted heads and furs. But each of these trophies of his days as a killer he regards as a martyr. No longer is Curwood the hunter, the trapper, the destroyer of wild life. A great light has come to him, and in what he terms his religion, he believes that the wild animals understand he is their friend. He has put this conversion of his into a book which is announced for publication in the spring. "God's Country, The Trail to Happiness", it will be called; and he says it has given him greater joy to write this confession and conversion of a killer than anything he has done.

"Nature is my religion," he says; "and my desire, my ambition, the great goal I wish to achieve, is to take

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my readers with me into the heart of this nature. I love it, and I feel that they must love it—if I can only get the two acquainted."

"God's Country", in Curwood's philosophy, is not some specifically located modern Garden of Eden, it is all out-of-doors, all nature. That perhaps explains how easily Curwood can recreate in his own imagination the wild aspects of the far north in the woods near his home in Owosso. I don't think I've ever seen Jim more excited than on the day he found a deep pool in the little stream near Owosso, where he could throw in his line with a bobber and pull out one sunfish at a time. And I am confident too that there must be some psychological tie-up that has got Curwood interested in an ice-cream factory in Owosso. Certainly there is something analogous between the frozen north and frozen ice-cream.

Many of Curwood's admirers have wondered why he has confined all his activities to the north and has never explored and written about the tropics. Snakes, is the answer. Jim Curwood, who is not afraid of anything else on the face of the earth, stands in deadly fear of snakes and doesn't even like to hear about them, let alone come in contact with them. So there is little hope for stories of the tropics from his pen.

Curwood's output to date (and he is still a young man in his early forties) is seventeen volumes,—novels and collections of short stories, and a history of the Great Lakes,—to say nothing of the stories that have appeared only in magazines. The very size of his output has been an asset, because his writing is easy and facile. In addition, in my opinion, Curwood has the greatest sense of the dramatic—or I might say, melodramatic — of any writer in this country. He can tell a story supremely well. And what is a novel except "a good story, well told" or, as I believe Professor William Lyon Phelps condensed it, "a good story"?

NIGHT PICTURE

BY DANIEL HENDERSON

AN oak rose up in the fields of night
And wove its branches into a snare.
The stars escaped in a high, swift flight—
But the moon hung prisoned there!

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PROPHETS OF DEMOCRACY

BY ANZIA YEZIERSKA

ONE of the great events of our International Garment Workers' Union some years ago, was a lecture on democracy by Professor John Dewey.

"Who is he?" came the eager question when the lecturer was announced at our local. "Is he another one of these professors talking down to us from their heads!"

"Professor Dewey! Everybody in America knows who Professor Dewey is," our leader answered. "He ain't just a professor. He's from the higher-ups—the educated—but he is a *real person.* He is the American Tolstoy."

And so we heard the American Tolstoy.

And then we knew—knew why the East Side, in their surge of enthusiasm, called his book the "new Bible of America".

The following night there was a rush at all the local libraries for "Democracy and Education". Some of us, fired into reckless extravagance by the inspiring speaker, denied ourselves lunches for a month to buy his book. Others, more prudent, clubbed together in twos and threes and contented ourselves with owning just a part of the book.

For weeks and months afterward during lunch hour in the factory, we'd gather together in groups, sitting over machines, on window sills, over bales of cloaks—between mouthfuls of bread and herring, we'd read aloud the thought-kindling words of this "new Bible of America".

We did not always understand what we read, but even the most educated language drew us and lifted us out of ourselves. Sometimes we'd spend an entire lunch hour struggling to get the full meaning of such a simple paragraph as this:

> Every expansive era in the history of mankind has coincided with the operation of factors which have tended to eliminate distance between people and classes previously hemmed in from one another. Even the alleged benefits of war spring from the fact that conflict of peoples at least enforces intercourse between them and thus accidentally enables them to learn from one another, and thereby expand their horizon.

It was as though our own Tolstoy were speaking.

> A separation into privileged and subject class prevents social fusion. The evils thereby affecting the superior class are less material and less perceptible but equally real. Their culture tends to become sterile, their art showy display and artificial; their wealth luxurious; their knowledge overspecialized; their manner fastidious rather than humane.

The purpose and meaning of democracy! That was the part that set us on fire—lifted us on wings! We'd forget that we were only machine-hands in a factory, and we'd forget that we had over us foremen and bosses. Visions of an ideal democracy would

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rise over us like songs of freedom of an oppressed people.

Since the writing of this book scores of works on democracy have been written, but this solidly packed volume stands out as the source book of the highest thought of democracy, education, and Americanization.

Unfortunately, Professor Dewey's style lacks flesh and blood. It lacks that warm personal touch that would enable his readers to get close to him. He thinks so high up in the head that only the intellectual few can follow the spiraling point of his vision. His sentences are compressed kernels of thought. And one has to break open each kernel separately to get even the partial meaning of his words.

One wonders why a man so imbued with the spirit of democracy must use such undemocratic language, and wonders if the reason lies in the man himself. For style is the unconscious breadth of personality. Can it be that this giant of the intellect—this pioneer in the realms of philosophy—has so suppressed the personal life in himself that his book is devoid of the intimate, self-revealing touches that make writing human? Can it be that Professor Dewey, for all his large, social vision, has so choked the feelings in his own heart that he has killed in himself the power to reach the masses of people who think with the heart rather than with the head?

Among the best of the recent books dealing with the problems of citizenship and Americanization is Professor Erskine's "Democracy and Ideals". It is written in a style so simple that anyone with but an elementary knowledge of English can enjoy it. In words so plain, so clear that a child can understand, Professor Erskine has touched on the profoundest social questions of the day. That is what makes it so different from many other works on democracy that have been published. It is not just high words. It is not for the intellectual few. It is a book for the brick-layer and coal-heaver as well as for the college president. There is a warm, personal current pulsing through every line that grips the reader's heart and mind and imagination.

A few pages chosen at random are sufficient to show the compelling quality of Professor Erskine's style.

> Most of us do not know our ideals. What is worse most of us do not know what an ideal is. In current speech whatever is ideal is understood either to be undesirable, opposite to the real, or else belong to a better world, vainly dreamed of in present conditions. But an ideal properly defined is both the child and the father of the real; it is both desirable and practicable; it is a solution of present need which imagination proposes—imagination at once directed and subdued by experience, at once fortified and restrained by the will. In this sense my subject, "Democracy and Idealism", is roughly equivalent to "Democrary and What It Wants".
>
> It is not quite enough, however, to know what we want. An ideal is not genuine even though it be practicable, until our will is enlisted to achieve it. Unless our ideals are fortified by our determination to accomplish them, our ideals will not take living form.

Professor Erskine, the man who takes pride in the fact that he is the son of a weaver, points unerringly to the root of many an immigrant problem:

> Under all our present and past ideals lies the assumption that America is an Eldorado, a place where life will yield wealth and happiness without a corresponding exertion on our part—a place, that is, where ideals are realized with slight effort of the will. So long as the notion of Eldorado persists, of our country as a land of special privilege, how can the ideal of economic liberty be genuine? What we are after is not equality of fortune nor of opportunity, but success of ourselves above our fellows, or else wealth acquired without effort.

Through various angles of approach Professor Erskine has come to the conviction that we in America are detached from our past, and that this de-

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tachment is at the bottom of our national discord. The remedy, he believes, lies in collaboration for a common end. Professor Erskine speaks not only as an educator; his is the voice of the man in the street. He has heard the cry of the oppressed and in the bigness of his soul understood and interpreted it:

> We now understand better the obligation upon us all to provide clothing and shelter for our fellows in need. The most selfish man now loses a little sleep, even in a comfortable bed, if he knows a beggar is couched on the cold pavement in front of his house. But this is the only charity we are yet deeply interested in, and is but *physical charity*. We are not yet quick to share the intellectual bread and drink which has come to us by good fortune. The beggar and the starving man trouble us. But we are not yet greatly troubled by ignorance in a man, though his ignorance may bring himself and his family to many kinds of disaster...though his ignorance may poison us with disease, or what is as dangerous, with prejudice and the beginning of hate.

Professor Erskine has justly been called "a prophet within the law". Sometimes there is indeed danger of his being a little too much within the law. The chapter dealing with universal training for national service has roused a diversity of opinion. Professor Erskine believes that with the right kind of educational directors our present military training camps can be converted into national vocational schools where men and women could be maintained at the national expense while fitting themselves for their life work. It is a question whether you can pour new wine into old bottles and have good results.

But John Erskine is lifted beyond the law—beyond the established order of things, and touches his greatest height when he attacks the arrogance of the intellectual who holds himself aloof from the people "rather than cheapen his pursuit of truth by making his work available for the many".

"Schooling of the Immigrant", by Frank V. Thompson, is the first of eleven studies on Americanization. It aims to establish a common viewpoint, a closer bond—a deeper brotherhood—between the native and the foreign-born. As a text-book it gets to the heart of the matter and will be found invaluable to teachers interested in the education of the immigrant. Mr. Thompson points out that our present democracy has seen fairly well its obligation to the child, but inadequately realized its duty toward the adult.

Our night schools—the immigrant's only door of escape from his deadening struggle for bread—have been left too long to overworked, tired teachers. The vast majority of these night school teachers take the job as a means of earning a few extra dollars to supplement their insufficient salaries. The result, of course, is an utter demoralization. Classes that start out with fifty pupils soon dwindle to a meagre handful. At the opening session the classrooms are crowded with wide-eyed, eager immigrants, burning with desire—and consumed by intellectual and spiritual hunger—to learn English, to get in touch with things American. But the apparent indifference of the teachers soon kills their enthusiasm, so that they return to the Ghetto streets, disappointed, disillusioned—cheated.

"Schooling of the Immigrant" shows how to put the education of the foreign-born on a new basis. Instead of handing out information from the platform of their superior knowledge, these night schools should be service stations. The teacher should be looked upon as a friend,—a coworker,—the chosen leader who will open up to the immigrant the heart of America.

> National unification means the realization of the oneness of the native and foreign born.

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We need to understand each other. Misunderstanding each other when there is a confusion of tongues, hence the need of establishing through education a medium of communication. But knowledge of English is only a means, not an end, and naturalization is in the same category. We do not judge quality of citizenship in the native from the fact that he speaks English or that he has the right to vote, but from the way in which he exercises the rights of citizenship.

The lessening use of the term "Americanization" shows appreciation of the fact that national unification is not a matter of conversion from a lower to a higher plane, but rather a process of joining equally meritorious forces for a better nationalism, a more perfect state of human happiness.

Ivor Brown's "The Meaning of Democracy" warms the heart with the new vision of education—education where teacher and students meet as equals, where the highest scholarship touches hands with the humble desire to know. The book is an essay in definition, an attempt to show what democracy implies when stripped clean of its false clothing.

Democracy imposes upon us not only the duty of thinking for ourselves but also of seeing that the whole community is in a position to think for itself. An uneducated democracy is a contradiction in terms, for the simple reason that power will remain with those who can manufacture opinion at their will....

Ivor Brown calls upon us to concentrate more upon improving our thinking than upon increasing our information. At present we are crushed beneath outworn institutions, buried alive beneath mountains of dead phrases. The world is surfeited with symbols. It needs no more beautiful abstractions and inspiring names; it needs only to make alive and real the experiences for which those names stand. One man who digs his philosophy out of the depths of his own heart is worth hundreds who take it ready-made from other people's books. "Every teacher, every student, young or old, who makes of education a searchlight on reality, is a genuine servant of democracy."

Democracy and Education. By John Dewey. The Macmillan Co.
Democracy and Ideals. By John Erskine. George H. Doran Company.
Schooling of the Immigrant. By Frank V. Thompson. Harper and Bros.
The Meaning of Democracy. By Ivor C. Brown. A. C. McClurg and Co.

A FABLE

BY MARX G. SABEL

THE peacock spread his fan
Proudfully,
Conscious of the two sparrows
Behind him.
The sparrows
Took advantage of the shade.

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THE BOOKLOVERS OF TOMORROW

In the January issue of THE BOOKMAN *the problem of the development of a love of literature in the minds of the younger generation was discussed by prominent educators. This month leading librarians throughout the country contribute a symposium which demonstrates their deep interest in the subject.*

Recently published figures showing a decrease of nearly 100,000 readers in the general library of the University of Chicago in 1918-19 as compared with 1917-18, have attracted widespread attention. They are not, apparently, indicative of a lessening interest in reading, but are explained by the decreased number of students resulting from the war. The reports from the librarians are, upon the whole, encouraging. Interest in reading shows a healthy growth.

Nevertheless, the fact is emphasized that public libraries need a larger degree of recognition if their work is to be fully accomplished. They are the centres of community intelligence. Their influence could be widely extended by establishing branch libraries and by enlarging their facilities for buying good books.

Cooperation between the library and the school already exists, but the maximum of beneficial result has not been reached. A concerted, systematic endeavor to make this cooperation more effective is worthy of the serious consideration of thoughtful men and women.—H. L. W.

WASHINGTON

By George F. Bowerman

Librarian, Public Library of the District of Columbia

THERE has been a steady growth in the use of this library from the time I took charge sixteen years ago. We have never been able to keep up with the demand, principally because Congress has not given us adequate appropriations, allowed us to build our branches, etc. The fiscal year ended June 30 last showed the largest circulation. It was just under 900,000 volumes. Had we had a branch system I am sure it would have been 3,000,000. Furthermore, I would say that adult readers are demanding more and more serious books: that is, more biography, travel, and especially more books on economics and current problems. Not in the least decrying fiction circulation, I report that when I came here sixteen years ago the percentage of fiction was 84; now it runs from about 52 to 55. I feel sure I could reduce it below 50 if I could carry out plans I have in mind. I mean if I could have not only all the money I need for books, which I have not, but, even more important, if I could have a sufficiently large and well-trained staff to give each reader all the advice he needs in his reading. I am persuaded that a good deal of poor reading is done, whether in or out of the library, as a result of the fact that people are not furnished with adequate advice. The poor book is made prominent and

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shouted from the housetops and so gets read. People want advice and if they could have cultivated, well-read people to advise them, whether in bookstores or in libraries, they would read better books.

Our experience shows that children and young people generally are using the library in ever growing numbers. Parents are coming to us more and more for advice in the matter of book purchases or for the borrowing of books for their children's reading. Here again, if we had the force to meet every such demand we would still further improve the reading done by children. The teachers tell us that the movies make their work difficult by creating a demand among the children for excitement. Yet although classroom texts sometimes fail to hold the children's attention, the teachers report that the books we send to the schools do arouse interest. Children are flocking to the library in ever increasing numbers, in spite of the fact that it is on a very dangerous point both from streetcars and automobiles. They are reading good books and come to us for help in their school lesson problems. Even greater care is exercised in the choice of books added to the children's department than can be exercised in the choice of books for adult readers. The children who come to the library read and enjoy the standards—including Dickens, Cooper, Stevenson, Scott, "Lorna Doone", "Two Years Before the Mast", etc.—as well as the books by Miss Alcott and others more distinctively children's classics. If we were able to have branches all over the city as we ought, we could have a very large circulation especially among children, and I am sure that it would be good reading.

The population of Washington is somewhat above the average of that of most American cities. This perhaps accounts in part for the high standards of the demands made upon the library, though we take some credit to ourselves for the choice of books we make and for the directing help that we give to readers.

I am inclined to agree that the movie is something to be contended with in our American life. It has proved such a gold mine that it is being developed to a high degree and is omnipresent. So much the more reason why municipalities must appropriate immensely larger sums for public education, that is for both schools and libraries. So far as the library is concerned, there are few cities that have made much more than a beginning at what ought to be done to develop this part of its public educational equipment.

ATLANTA

By Tommie Dora Barker

Librarian, Carnegie Library, Atlanta

WHILE there has been a falling off in the circulation of volumes from this library for the past few years, I do not attribute it to a decreasing interest in books but rather to the fact that people have had less time for reading during the last few years owing to conditions growing out of the war. And, in the case of this library, I should add the purely local reason that there has been no corresponding increase in book fund to meet the rising cost of books, so that fewer books have been added to the library during this time. This library is entirely unable to supply the demand that exists for books. Within the last four months a larger number

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of new books have been purchased than for some months previous, resulting in a corresponding increase for circulation.

This library has a larger circulation of books belonging to the class of pure literature than of any other class of books except fiction, of course (which seems to be taboo as literature as far as libraries are concerned). As to who is the reading public,—not taking into consideration the juvenile readers,—it consists of the students who read more or less from compulsion, the men and women who read either for recreation or from an intellectual interest, and a comparatively small number of young people in whose lives an interest in books has a definite place. The library has a good circulation of books on trades and professions among young people who are just entering the business world or who are interested in working out their business problems. It is doubtful if much reading, purely from an intellectual interest, is done by this group of readers, owing to their social and business obligations.

I think the moving-pictures are undoubtedly having their effect on the amount of reading being done. They offer the combination of entertainment and opportunity for social intercourse, besides being somewhat alluring in themselves and giving whatever they have to give without requiring any effort on the part of the individual.

ST. LOUIS

By Arthur E. Bostwick
Librarian, St. Louis Public Library

OUR circulation seems to be increasing, but I interpret this to be the usual increase consequent on increase in unemployment, which is noticed, I think, in all libraries. It has been asserted by some that the curves representing respectively balances in savings banks and library circulation always show an exactly opposite movement, the savings increasing as the circulation decreases, and vice versa. That there is an action of this sort is beyond question, although it is probably masked in many cases by other causes. I believe, however, that apart from this there is a noticeable general increase in reading, and an investigation made several years ago leads me to conclude that this is not an increase in individual reading, but rather an increase in readers. It should be borne in mind that questions about reading addressed to public libraries can receive in the nature of things only partial answers. We know only about the reading of our own books, and as we do not put into libraries books that we believe to be injurious or worthless, it follows that our statistics relate only to a pretty good class of reading. There is a vast amount of "infra" library literature and "infra" library reading, but there are no statistics of it. I should call all library reading fairly substantial, although, of course, much of it is done very properly for recreational purposes. Personally, I believe that it is difficult or perhaps impossible, to draw the line between educational and recreational reading. One may read a work on calculus for amusement, and there is educational value in the trashiest novel.

I am not at all pessimistic about the moving-picture. If those who are worrying about the moving-picture would recognize it as the greatest avenue for reaching the public devised since the invention of printing, we should have fewer futile efforts to counteract it, and more to direct it.

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It needs direction very badly. So far as I have seen, however, it encourages rather than discourages the use of libraries. Much of the increased use of specific books may be traced to reproductions of those books, or allusions to them, on the screen. I usually find that distrust or dislike of the movies is very general among persons who do not know them well.

YALE UNIVERSITY

By Andrew Keogh

Librarian, University Library

AT Yale the number of books issued is decidedly greater than in 1917-18, amounting, in 1919-20, to a thirty per cent increase in the number of books borrowed in the earlier year.

We keep no record of the number of students who use our reference rooms, so that we are unable to give any statistics on that point, but the attendants report that there is an undoubted increase in such reading, although it is not quite so much as in 1914, before the war started. The reason for the decrease as compared with 1914 is not, in my judgment, to be attributed to a difference in the reading habits of our student body, but merely to the decreased enrolment at Yale, as compared with the prewar year.

As to the quality of the reading, I am unable to notice any difference. The University Library is of course chiefly for graduate and professional students, and the quality of reading is, therefore, of the highest character. The undergraduates have their own special collection of 33,000 volumes, in addition to the resources of the whole University Library, and in this special undergraduate collection there are no poor books.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

By Ernest D. Burton

Director, University Libraries

THE decline in readers in the year 1918 as compared with 1917-18 is, in my judgment, entirely due to the decline in students as a result of the war. The figures for 1919-20 show an entire recovery, and indeed an excess above those of 1917-18. For the Harper Memorial Library they are 698,-219, though part of this increase is probably due to more perfect statistics. We have not yet reached the figures of 1916-17, but I anticipate that the record of 1920-21 will bring us back at least to those figures.

In classics, the figures for the last four years are as follows:

1916-17	50,960
1917-18	38,126
1918-19	33,205
1919-20	39,735

In this connection the following statement is deducible from the statistics in our report now in type, but not yet published: the total number of recorded readers for 1919-20 is 1,-137,123. This would mean per quarter a little over 284,000. As now the registration per quarter is about 5,000 students, the result is that each student averaged fifty-six visits to the library in three months (recorded visits only being counted). I suspect that the unrecorded visits would increase this by possibly twenty-five per cent. In the same period the number of books drawn and recorded was 520,-013, or 130,000 per quarter, an aver-

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age of twenty-six books per student. These figures do not at all show the use of books from open shelves, where the student simply helps himself. It must be borne in mind also that in a considerable number of cases books are drawn for use throughout the quarter, so that a single drawing may represent weeks of use. On the other hand, in the case of what we call reserved books, the book may have been used only part of a day.

These statistics do not seem to me to indicate that students in our universities are reading less. I am not so sure that they do very much voluntary reading. By far the larger portion of the reading indicated in the figures above is such as is required by the professors. On the other hand, when the reading of this character is as large an amount as it is in this university—in other words, when students are forced to read as much as they do here—it is hardly to be expected that they will add to this required reading much voluntary use of books. The whole question is a very interesting one, and worthy of thorough consideration.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

By William Warner Bishop

Librarian, University General Library

THE University of Michigan General Library does not keep any record showing the number of readers using the institution. To do so it would be necessary to station persons at the doors either of the buildings in which the various libraries of the university are housed, or of the reading rooms.

We do have figures showing the recorded use in the Main Library, and the circulation for home use in all the libraries of the university. The unrecorded use on the part of readers and investigators in the bookstacks is probably fully as great as that of which we have a definite record. That is to say, the student who comes to the main reading room, for example, seeking information on a topic, is likely to take down from the shelves a half-dozen or more volumes which are open to him without the intervention of any formality. We have no record of these. The same thing is true to a much larger degree of the use of the books in our stacks, to which all members of the faculty and graduate students have direct access.

Furthermore, various reading rooms maintained in the General Library and in the Departmental Libraries have open-shelf collections which are used very freely. I am inclined to think that the unrecorded use is greater than the recorded use.

The recorded use of books in the various reading rooms for the academic year 1919-20 reached a total of 243,569. The figures for the year 1918-19 were 147,996. The books drawn out of the various libraries of the university for home use in 1919-20 totaled 84,242, as against 50,616 in the previous year.

There is a reason for this difference, showing far greater use of the libraries in the past academic year. In January, 1920 the University of Michigan opened a large new library building. For the two years before that time, the library had been housed in temporary quarters, so that books were somewhat difficult of access, and its use was attended by minor discomforts which undoubtedly diminished the

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number of books consulted. Upon the completion of the new library building, not only did the recorded use within the building increase greatly, but the circulation of books for outside use likewise advanced at once.

I am very much interested to observe that the figures for the months of October and November, 1920, show, in most departments, an increase over those of the corresponding months of last year. The university is somewhat larger than last year, which will account to a certain extent for the increased recorded use. But there seems to be a steadily growing use of the library plant on the part of students and faculty, due in part, I have no question, to new facilities in the way of building, but more, in all probability, to the improved service which we have been able to render as a consequence of marked increases in the size of our staff and in the number of books available for use on open shelves. There is no question that the students in the University of Michigan use the library of the university, and that that use is growing rather than diminishing.

WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE

NEW YORK, *January*, 1921.

I REMEMBER that I was somewhat astonished when E. V. Lucas expressed surprise that I was writing in my room at the hotel where we both happened to be at the same time for several days last summer. He declared with an expression of sharp distaste that he could not write in hotel rooms. But said he had no difficulty in writing on trains. That rather got me, because I can't write at all on trains. And possibly because I was a bit peeved at the easy way in which he spoke of doing that exceedingly difficult thing, writing on trains, I asserted in reply that anybody ought to be able to write in *any kind* of a room. But I do know, what every writer knows, that the particular room one may be in can make a good deal of difference in the way one is able to write.

Of course, it does appear to be true that there are writers of a kind that can write anywhere in any circumstances, apparently with equal facility and their customary standard of merit, whatever that may be. I suppose war correspondents must be like that, and reporters for daily newspapers. We know that a good many war books were announced as having been written in dugouts, trenches, pill-boxes, tanks, submarines, hospitals, aeroplanes, and so on. In the matter of some of them I should not undertake to dispute that they had even been written in asylums.

I have known, and known well, men of that type of mind which seemed to be so completely under control that at will it could be turned on or off, so to say, like the stream from a water faucet. My friend Joyce Kilmer had such a head. It has been told how some of his most moving poems—for one instance "The White Ships and the Red"—were the result of hurried newspa-

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per assignments; how he could leave a poem in the middle of its composition, go out and lunch heartily for two hours, return and finish the writing of it; how early in his career he would walk up and down a room of his home in suburban New Jersey at two in the morning and dictate (without a pause) to his wife while carrying a shrilly crying child in his arms; how one of the best of his "Sunday stories" was dictated directly upon his arrival in a hospital with three fractured ribs (the result of being hit by his commutation train)—and how much more. A young man with a brain in perfect practical working condition. But even he was not free from the mysterious tricks of creative writing. For we know that when, after a daily round sustained for a number of years of high productivity, he went into the war which inspired countless others to *begin* writing, he suddenly ceased to write, practically altogether.

Poets and trains being up, brings to my mind my friend the Reverend Edward F. Garesché, S.J., a source of amusement to many of his friends because of his method of composition. He travels continually. Frequently he will excuse himself from a group with whom he is talking, go to his own seat, request the porter to bring him a card table, get out his traveling typewriter, rattle off several poems, return to his party, and resume conversation at about where he had left off. Some of his poems are very good; some (I'm sorry to have to say) are—not so good.

And so round we come again to the matter of writing in rooms. We know how Booth Tarkington writes: in what he calls a "work spree", in a room upstairs at home, a pile of freshly sharpened pencils ready to his hand—and that, doubtless, he wouldn't be able to write anything in an office if he were to be hanged for not doing it. (Probably never goes to an office.) Meredith Nicholson, on the other hand, declares that the only way it is possible for him to write is to go regularly at nine o'clock every morning to an office he has downtown, where, he tells anyone who may ask over the telephone, he'll be until five in the afternoon.

There are persons who like to have others around them, moving about, while they write. And people there are who find it necessary to lock themselves up, and can have no one else in the room. Though in some cases such persons would not mind the bang of a bass drum just the other side of the door. I know a man who had an office in lower Manhattan where for a considerable period, just outside his open window, a steam riveter was at work. Terrific it was, the way the noise of this machine smashed the air into tiny particles like a shower of broken glass. Callers who found this man contentedly writing would hold their ears and look at him with their hair on end from amazement. A man of highly nervous organism, too; one who would be very upset if his typewriter had a pale ribbon, or be spoiled for the day if he couldn't find the right pen—worn over just to his liking at the point. But, after the first day or so, Mr. Soaping (name of the gentleman I'm telling you about) I know didn't hear the riveter at all.

Then those exist—Royal Cortissoz is one—who, dictating all they do, can have in the room while they work only their secretary. Frequently is it the case, too, that none but the amanuensis to whom they have been long accustomed will do. A stranger throws 'em completely off. A novelist I know, the writer of a very good style, who becomes very much fussed up, and is practically destroyed, when he suspects

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a secretary of giving critical attention to the manner of his prose. An embarrassing thing about most stenographers, I have found, is that they are greatly grieved if you say *'em* for *them*, or anything like that. Or else they won't let you do such things at all, and edit everything pleasant back into perfectly good copybook English. Some of them won't even let you split an infinitive.

Who was it, Voltaire, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, somebody, who could write only when elaborately got up in his satins and ruffles? It is what not long ago was called a "bromidium" to say that humorists are sad people. I'd probably be thought humorous if I should call myself any particular flier as a humorist, but this I know: wherever in my writing I may have approached being amusing, that generally was written when I was considerably depressed. Forenoon is the best time for some to write; late at night for others. "Ben Hur", I seem to recall, was penned beneath a noble tree. At any rate, we frequently see pictures of novelists, particularly in England, at work in their gardens. The most familiar photographs, etchings, medallions, and so on of Mark Twain and of Robert Louis Stevenson at work, are those of them writing in bed. Now I can't (as some so take their breakfast) eat in bed; and I'm quite sure I should never be able comfortably to write anything there. I do not tell you how it is with me because I regard it as of deep interest to you to hear how it is with *me*, but merely to aid me in assembling a collection of facts concerning the freakishness of writing, and to suggest to you how very different it may be with *you*.

And I couldn't write under a tree. One writer, perhaps, writes more easily in the winter than in the summer, or it is the other way round. The mind of one, it may be, is stimulated by the companionship of an open fire, and that of another (for aught I know) by the companionship of an icebox. Personally, I think that it is well in writing for the weather to be cool enough to have the windows down; and that night is the best time, for the reason that your mind (or, at least, my mind) is more gathered together within the circle of light at your desk.

Frequently, however (as you know), after sitting for hours with your mind plumb stalled, it is not until shortly before your bedtime that that eccentric engine your brain gets buzzed up. Then, probably, you can't call the thing off if you want to. I will tell you a story:

A man there is, of some renown as a writer, who started a new book early last spring. For some considerable time he had been much discouraged about his writing. Hadn't been able to make it go. Could only lift heavily and painfully one stilted sentence after another. Used to take up now and then one or another of his early books and look into it. Marveled how it was that he ever could have written such clever stuff. Like Swift when late in life he reread "Gulliver", so did this man exclaim: "What a genius I had at that time!" He felt that the fire had gone out; his inner life seemed to have completely died; he was a hollow shell; could again neither receive nor impart anything worth half a jew's-harp. When, one day, he heard rosy, young Hugh Walpole say of himself that of course what he had written was merely a beginning to what he felt he might do, this man looked at rosy, young Hugh Walpole with a deeply gloomy and very jealous eye.

But, lo! as I say, this man started

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this new book. It began as a series of articles for which he was to be paid—that was *why* it was begun at all. Now see! With him it was as Professor George Edward Woodberry says of Poe in his admirable "Life"—for a time his genius had "slept". With the start of the new book he awoke. It began to run right out of the ends of his fingers. Took (that book) hold of him completely. He couldn't leave it. Go to bed, have to get up and go at it again. Try to go out for a round of exercise. After a block or so from his quarters, walk slower and slower. Miserable. Tortured. Turn back. Immediately happy again. Soon be back at work. Anybody who entangled him with an invitation anywhere enraged him beyond measure.

New book finished. Everything fine. Got another commission. Easy enough job. Set to at it. Empty vessel again! In despair. He'd make all sorts of excuses to himself to leave his place early in the morning to postpone beginning work. He'd go anywhere, with anybody, to keep as long as possible from facing that task again. Couldn't give any sensible explanation of his prolonged delay to the publishers. Kept putting them off again and again, with one cripple-legged excuse after another, in the hope that he'd come round. Matter became a disgrace.

Still queerer cases than that I know. Fellow who shared an apartment with me one time. When according to the accepted law of nature his mind should have been in a very bad way, then always was he at his best. After leading a regular, wholesome life for a period his mind would become dull, stale, and unprofitable. When, following a very different sort of period, he should in all reason have awakened with a splitting head, a swollen eye, and a shaking hand, he would get up at about dawn one morning in rattling fine spirits, his mind as clear as a bell, and with an impassioned desire to work. Could, then, write like a streak. But doesn't William James touch upon such a matter as this somewhere?

And Stevenson, how wrong he got the thing! What is it he tells us as to the years of apprenticeship to writing:

> It is only after years of such gymnastic that one can sit down at last, legions of words swarming to his call, dozens of turns of phrase simultaneously bidding for his choice, and he himself knowing what he wants to do and (within the narrow limit of a man's ability) able to do it.

Only last night it was I was talking to Jesse Lynch Williams. He said nothing of "legions of words swarming to his call", nary a mention of "dozens of turns of phrase simultaneously bidding for his choice". Instead, he asked if I found that writing came easier as time went on. No, he said, it seemed to him that writing became harder and harder the longer one wrote. That he had torn up everything he had done for a long while.

Always the paradox! Again, there are men who write with astonishing ease, or at least with astonishing rapidity, and write well. Not so long ago I began a novel in collaboration with a writer known and admired from coast to coast, a frequent contributor to THE BOOKMAN, and one of the best. We were to do this thing turn and turn about, a chapter by me, then a chapter by him, and so on. For something like ten days I toiled over chapter one. I labored and I groaned. When it was finished I was spent. I handed him the manuscript; he stuffed it into his overcoat pocket and went whistling away. Returned within a few days and handed me a wad of copy covering, I think, three chapters.

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Again I toiled in the sweat of my brow. Gave him another chapter. When, after a couple of weeks or something like that, he returned and I had read what he had done, I discovered that he had got people married that I hadn't known were yet born. The collaboration busted up.

My excellent friend does not like for me to tell this story, because he thinks it represents me as the conscientious artist and him as the shallow scribbler. Well, that was not so; his chapters were far better than mine. Nevertheless, his name I shall not give; I'll merely say that it has very much the sound of a name borne by one of the Elizabethan dramatists.

Then there is that sort of human head-piece which can only write when it absolutely has to. I allude to the magical instrument of coercion known as a "copy date". I know people, dozens of them, who having a month and a half ahead of them in which to do an article, can't possibly get started on it until it is almost too late to get it in on time to go to press—when a mad frenzy seizes them, their indolence vanishes like mist before the rising sun, their minds open like a flower, and all is well.

And the "galley slaves", those poor devils who for years have lived under the whip of "copy day" every day. How they dream of the "real" things they might do, given time. If (they think) the Lord would only subsidize them! Now and then the Devil takes one of them and does this very thing. The happy man gets some sort of a sinecure. All he has to do is to go write. And (in all probability) that's all there is to that story. He is like those things Riley tells about who "swaller theirselves". He gets nothing written.

What do you write with? And why do you write with whatever it is you write with instead of with something else? Why did Mr. Howells (in all the writing of his which I have seen) use a script-letter typewriter instead of a Roman-letter machine? Why does Mr. Le Gallienne do so much of his copy (if not all of it) by hand? Why is it that Mr. Huneker could never either dictate or learn to run a typewriter? How is it possible for those Englishmen—Swinnerton and Bennett, for instance—to put forth in a few months whole novels in the monkish hand of an illuminated missal? (I have seen the original manuscript of "The Old Wives' Tale", every page like a copperplate engraving, and hardly a correction throughout.) And why is it that it seems to me most natural to write some things with a pen, others with a pencil, most things on a typewriter, and yet again mix the use of all three implements in one composition? I cannot tell you.

Some authors, if they are going to write about a slum, have to go and live in a *slum* while they are writing about a slum. Other authors, if they are going to write about life in an Ohio town, go to Italy to write about life in an Ohio town. In his excellent book "On the Trail of Stevenson" Clayton Hamilton says:

> Throughout his lifelong wanderings, Stevenson rarely or never attempted to describe a place so long as he was in it. For his selection of descriptive detail he relied always on the subconscious artistry of memory. He trusted his own mind to forget the non-essential; and he seized upon whatever he remembered as, by that token, the most essential features of a scene—the features, therefore, that cried out to be selected as the focal points of the picture to be suggested to the mind's eye of his readers.

The author of the thirteen volumes known as "The Chronicles of Barsetshire", a detailed picture of the English clergy of his time, had never associated with bishops, deans, and arch-

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deacons; he built them up (to use his own expression) out of his "moral consciousness".

But round to rooms again. Often has it been told how Anthony Trollope worked. How he accomplished so much —thirty-odd novels besides as many tales—by a method he recommended to all who wish to pursue successfully the literary career. In the drawing-room of the Athenæum Club, in a railway carriage, or on the ocean, wherever he might be, he seated himself for three hours as a limit, with his watch before him; and regularly as it marked the quarter-hour he turned off two hundred and fifty words, undisturbed by any distraction about him. We know that the unlettered man of genius John Bunyan wrote his immortal allegory "The Pilgrim's Progress" in Bedford jail. And there is being advertised now a book recently written in an American prison. And much writing has been done in garrets. Then here's our old friend George Moore. Again and again he has told of exactly the places it was necessary for him to live in while he wrote certain books. I open at random "Ave"; and I find this:

> I descended the hillside towards the loveliest prospect that ever greeted mortal eyes.... And I walked thinking if there were one among my friends who would restore Mount Venus sufficiently for the summer months, long enough for me to write my book.

Now, to be quite frank with you, I didn't intend to write this article at all. You may remember that when I set out I was merely in disagreement with Mr. Lucas concerning the matter of writing in a hotel room. One thing (as it will) led to another; and the upshot has been all this pother. However, there are, I hope, no bones broken—and that's saying a good deal for any kind of a discussion in these unsettled times.

What I am coming to is (the fashionable thing to come to nowadays) the psychic. A fellow I know was much puzzled. He recently got back to 16 Gramercy Park from a trip around the world. I saw him there having some toast and a pot of tea. He told me these interesting circumstances. He would be at a superbly appointed hotel in some city. Beautiful suite of rooms. Commodious bathroom with lovely bay window. Everything to make for perfect mental and physical well being. Impotent to write there. Later runs into some terrible dump of a lodging-house. Horrible din of low noises all about. One dirty window looks out on scene of squalor. So cold at night has to put chair on bed and sit there to be nearer gas jet. Gets on wonderfully with writing. Strikes another place, handsomest of all; writes pretty well. Comes to most fearful place yet; can't write at all.

Couldn't make head nor tail of the matter, this fellow. Discussed the thing with many people. Finally found young woman who gave convincing explanation. It's like this: undoubtedly you are, in any room, affected by something of the spirit which lingers there of former occupants. Maybe there were persons, whatever their station in life, sympathetic to your spirit—maybe not.

MURRAY HILL

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THE WICKEDNESS OF BOOKS

BY ELINOR WYLIE

THE little shelf of books over my desk represents in its way quite a surprising amount of wickedness. Shocking books they are, most of them, and they know it. Dangerous books, downright immoral books, sly tempters, corrupters of virtue. Extravagance so monstrous as to deserve the name of dishonesty is the crime for which these books are responsible. Subtle Mephistopheles to an invertebrate Faust, one after another of them smiles at me with serene self-satisfaction as I sit pounding the typewriter on the desk beneath its lordly shelf.

Perhaps, on sober second thought, the shelf is more ladylike than lordly. No five-foot shelf emeritus this, but a modest three-foot affair, or shall I say a perfect thirty-six? I cursed it roundly when I first saw it, because there was no fireplace below it, and because it was so obviously constructed to accommodate china cats. Yet it has proved a blessing in a disguise of white paint, for in July who wants a fire, and whether or not it longs for its feline friends, it holds a few books very nicely.

Let me confess frankly and at once that among this varied and variable company there is no Bible, no Complete Works of Shakespeare, no Homer, no Dante. Milton in his entirety is also lacking, although I often think that certain "solemn musicks" of his surpass anything else that mortal man has written. They are a strange and ill-assorted few, old loves, new loves; books from which I have not been parted for years, which have traveled with me in many lands in the dressing-case the porter was never allowed to carry; books which I bought last winter, or the week before last.

These it is which are the villains of my first apostrophe. Bought in a season of the strictest intended economy, at heartrending and fantastic prices, they stand in the right-hand corner of the shelf and mock me with cruel gayety. Gayety is the word. Once when you said "a motley row of books" you meant that they were parti-colored only in relation to each other, but now a single book can be motley all by itself. Look at J. C. Squire, the last, because he is the tallest, of the right-hand group. Do you suppose he likes his cover? Some people would, of course, but I shouldn't think *he* would. Amy Lowell, on the other hand, must be quite happy clad in malachite and tangerine, and I am sure Lola Ridge rejoices in rust-color. Lola was a present, and therefore represents no extravagance. Nor does Francis Thompson, in faded green linen, who stands next to J. C. Squire and makes the latter's coat of many colors look so much the gayer by contrast. Him I rescued from an inappropriate own-

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er, long ago, which far from being a crime was a good deed and deserving of praise. Next comes a volume by my friend Bill Benét, a gift from the author this, for which I have endeavored to thank him by putting him in good company, between Thompson and Masefield.

Chesterton will be annoyed to find himself between the Shropshire Lad and Amy Lowell—how to torture your Chesterton! Yet years ago, when I was a schoolgirl and he wrote of Robert Browning, how I loved him! Theodore Maynard has been cruelly parted from his friend, and stands next to Lionel Johnson, who is, I imagine, snubbing him a little. Delightful dark-green "Poetical Works" of Lionel Johnson, long searched for and at last discovered, I cannot find it in my heart to call you an extravagance! Rather let me turn indignantly to the aforementioned Mr. Maynard, to William H. Davies, to "Georgian Poetry for 1919", which has only given me an aching desire to buy Drinkwater's, de la Mare's, and Robert Graves's latest books. I go on to Sassoon and my reproaches weaken; I reach Ralph Hodgson and they cease altogether. "The New Poetry" looks like a schoolbook, but it is a fat and satisfactory anthology if you want, as I do, to find out what the new poetry is; besides, it contains splendid chunks of Lindsay and nice slices of Frost, which are to my mind well chosen.

And now, with the somewhat cumbrous word *anthology* to direct it, the eye flies straight to that solid block of gold and darkest blue embellishing the middle of the shelf; here it perceives several small but goodly volumes bearing the imprint of the Clarendon Press; others too, not quite so goodly but still likable, who have succumbed to a not unnatural temptation, and are sincerest flatterers of their neighbors. Finally, my own original "Oxford Book of English Verse", dated 1901 and mine since that same year, when as a piratical child I stole it from my father, and cherished it like the apple of my eye. Thanks to it, I used in those days to "sup with Landor and with Donne", as Mr. Yeats says he is going to do in Heaven (though personally I should have thought Landor would be more likely to sup on Mr. Yeats than with him).

To return to my "Oxford Book"; gone now is its coat of dark-blue cloth, worn to tatters in my service. Before the war, in a time of great prosperity, I had made for it a most beautiful leather jerkin of smooth and sombre blue, ever so slightly tooled in gold by a discreet hand. For a moment I can see the book itself, not here, but faraway in time as well as distance, lying on a little desk of Italian walnut in a room whose cream-colored walls are crossed by oaken beams so old and black that it needs the gayety of the blue linen curtains sprinkled with yellow rosebuds, and the daffodils in blue honey-jars, to make the scene the fairy thing it is. Mock at my book if you please—I know it has been spoken of with scorn in a novel by Gilbert Cannan, and with affection in a short story by Richard Harding Davis—yet nothing can shake the faithful friendship of nineteen long years. "Dressed so fine" it should really be downstairs with other beautifully clad but none the less beloved books.

The only other well-dressed book in my present shelf-full—and this too is a permanency among many passing whims—is a charming little claret-colored Keats which my grandfather gave me when I was a girl, and from which I have never been parted since. Alas, why did the same dear person

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give me Shelley in three large volumes bound in white, and printed on what to my eyes appears to be water-color paper? These books lurk in the inmost fastnesses of the library, and yet because I possess them I have all these years read my favorite poet in a loathsome school edition, an insult indeed to that pard-like spirit beautiful and swift.

Swinburne too is in the library, not lurking, but proud in six stout but extraordinarily light volumes, midnight hued, purchased in Oxford, so there's no room for him on the shelf except in the anthologies. I once owned an interesting little book in which Theodore Watts-Dunton had painstakingly put together all of Swinburne's worst poems; I don't mean his wickedest poems, but all those which are to his glorious best what Wordsworth's "Idiot Boy" is to the "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality". But wait, here is another gorgeously dressed book, in scarlet and gold: Rostand's new poems which my young cousin has just sent me from Paris, and which must surely represent shocking extravagance on her part, to judge by the cover, for I have not yet looked inside. Next to the distinguished Academician is a tattered and coverless little copy of "Fêtes Galantes", which is nevertheless printed on delightful parchmenty paper, and which when I am rich shall have a new coat of faded rose or turquoise.

Here is Henry Newbolt, brought upstairs from Kipling-haunted shelves to be read aloud to someone who likes that sort of thing. I like it myself, really. "An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe." I must bring Emily Dickinson upstairs too, for at present she is between Kipling and Edgar Lee Masters, and I am afraid they will frighten her with their quarreling. Here are Meredith's poems, green and small, and Henley's, larger and lighter green, and half a dozen Elizabethan dramatists, very slim and bright in copper-color. Presents, all of these, but I should have bought them long ere this had they not been given to me years ago. And this modest little Temple edition of Shakespeare's sonnets—I know you will not accuse me of extravagance if I tell you that I bought it; yet I did far better than that, for I stole it from a Baconian!

On the whole, though these too-captivating books may often have deprived me of what most people consider the necessities of life, are they not worth the sacrifice? And what are these so-called necessities of which they have deprived me? Here is a little list, compiled last winter, of useful articles which I should have purchased instead of those wicked books. Woolen stockings for myself, Jaeger underwear for my husband, a hot-water bag, an electric heater, fur-lined gloves. All excellent things in their way, and yet I really believe that at present I would rather have the books.

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PEOPLE READ BOOKS

BY ALFRED KREYMBORG

People read books.
People go to the play.
People hie to operas and museums.
Not that they read books, go to the play, hie to operas and museums.
But that they go to themselves, read themselves, hear themselves, see themselves.
They don't like what they don't read of themselves, hear of themselves, see of themselves.
They have a tendency to think that, bad.
And so to express themselves.
They like what they read of themselves, hear of themselves, see of themselves.
Have a tendency to think this, good.
And so to express themselves.
People cannot read what they cannot read, hear what they cannot hear, see what they cannot see.
One stands in front of a glass, sees what one sees, cannot see what one cannot see.
But a looking-glass is monotonous.
Liking oneself monotonous.
One must vary the glass and the liking.
The liking-glass.
So people read books.
Go to the play.
Hie to operas and museums.
Say how-do-you-do to themselves.
Smile and accept themselves.
Frown and dis-own all others.
It is well indeed that they do.
Most fortunate that they do.
It is all they can do.

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There are millions upon millions of miles of earth, air and water
that cannot hear them or see them.
Quatrillions upon quatrillions of stars that cannot accomplish the
miracle.
That couldn't if they wanted to, haven't it in them to want to.
So it is well that people read books, go to plays, hie to operas and
museums.
Well indeed that they hear and see themselves.
Most fortunate that they like what they are.
And so express themselves.
It is all they can do.

THE CHARM OF LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY

BY JESSIE B. RITTENHOUSE

"YOU will find me on Vista Avenue, off Woodland Road, in Auburndale," she had written, and here I was, on a crisp winter morning, setting out from Boston to visit the first poet I had ever seen in the flesh. I had reached Boston only a night or two before, without an acquaintance in the old city which was still the awesome court of American letters; had reached there at a most dramatic moment, when the people were thronging the Common, and processions with torches were filing up Beacon Hill to the State House where a trumpeter in mediæval costume was announcing—not the New Year but the New Century! I look back upon it as a romantic ruling of events that, having made the impractical hazard of poetic criticism as a life work, I was impelled to cast myself upon Boston with the tide of the new century.

What New York and other cities are to poetry publication now, Boston and Boston alone was, at that time. Aside from the poetic output of the old and stable houses, the young firm of Copeland and Day had started in the middle 'nineties, equipped chiefly with enthusiasm and discernment; but before paying the final price of its daring, it had given to the world the "Songs From Vagabondia" and many other volumes which make its imprint of value to collectors. Small, Maynard and Company had taken over most of the Copeland and Day books and were bringing out the "Last Songs" in the Vagabondia series, Hovey having died shortly before. They were publishing, too, most of Bliss Carman's personal work, though another young firm, Lamson, Wolffe and Company, had some of his volumes. All of these publishers had been sending me their

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books of verse for review in a series of syndicate articles upon poets. It was necessary in those days to placate the Philistine, to keep up the illusion that the poet is a romantic figure, to intrigue the public—as the modern would say—with the poet's personality and then make adroit interpolations of his verse; and because I had passed them all in review in my series of articles—Carman, Hovey, Clinton Scollard, Alice Brown, Louise Imogen Guiney, and many others who were being printed in Boston—I had come on to seek them out and was making my first pilgrimage to "Vista Avenue, off Woodland Road, in Auburndale".

Bliss Carman had written me shortly before, when I had mentioned Miss Guiney: "The most undoubtedly genuine spark of genius—in Auburndale, shall I say, or America? In younger English today. Yes, and I had the very good taste to be born in her epoch, which is one of the things I bless the gods for." This enthusiasm did not seem at all extravagant, for Miss Guiney's work, with its pungent personal flavor combined with the paradox of classic fineness, had set her sharply apart and given to her verse a distinction wholly its own. But her personality was still a conjecture; and when I arrived at the little station indicated, I was struggling with the fact that this sylvan deity who lived on Vista Avenue off Woodland Road was at one and the same time the village postmistress of Auburndale!

Now when one conjures up a picture of a New England postmistress, he expects her to be true to type—tall, masculine, middle-aged, spectacled, and abrupt of speech; and I was inwardly fortifying myself for the worst as I made my way, after numerous inquiries, to the small house under a sheltering bank, and was shown into a book-lined room, fairly impregnated with literary atmosphere. Miss Guiney was at the post office but was expected at any moment—she had left word for me to wait. I was seated in a comfortable chair and left alone to glance at the books and pictures and to fall into a day dream, so that I did not notice the door open and a friend of Miss Guiney—for it could not be she—stand before me. Doubtless, I thought, this exquisite creature is some house-guest who has come to help me beguile the time, for she was young and gay as spring and came lightly into the room with her hand on the head of a great Saint Bernard dog, making, as she stood there, a subject for Landseer. Whoever she was, she was an apparition to "haunt, to startle and waylay", and it was with difficulty that I pulled myself together and exorcised the ghost of the village postmistress as I responded to the greeting of Miss Guiney! It is a happy fortune for a poet to be beautiful, and Miss Guiney had a beauty as distinctive as her work, with the dark-blue eyes, chestnut hair, and fresh color of the Celt, and the delicate and sensitive features of one who lives with the finer emotions and has an eager joy in life. She was vivacious and companionable to a degree, and informed me as we climbed the stairs to her "Sanctuary", that she spent one hour a day at the post office! Uncle Sam's henchmen did the rest, for she had been appointed, as I learned later, by an admiring president who was doing his bit for American letters. In the remaining hours she wrote, for this was her fruitful period, and read Sir Thomas Browne and Jeremy Taylor and Burke and Lamb and Hazlitt, and for recreation ran far afield about Auburndale with her dogs.

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Miss Guiney's study which inspired the poem, "Sanctuary",—

> High above Hate I dwell,
> O storms, farewell!—

first arrested one's attention, by a peculiar paradox, with the implements of war. Here were sword and spurs and other accoutrements of the cavalry service, belonging, as she hastened to inform me, to her father who had been a brigadier general in the Civil War. She was born to the tradition of drum-beat and sword-flash, and recalling "The Wild Ride", "The Knight-Errant", "The Kings", "The Vigil-at-Arms", I saw why she used the symbolism of battle and why she could pack so much valor into a line. Nevertheless I recalled more happily those fine lines in "Sanctuary" where storms are

> Winnowed into silence on that wind
> Which takes wars like a dust and leaves but love behind.

All about us was the evidence of that recondite scholarship which distinguished Miss Guiney: mediæval books, archaic books, Latin poetry, early Italian and French poetry, early English poetry, and finally many rare volumes and souvenirs of those nearer to our time, particularly of Keats. First editions of some of the volumes, manuscript letters, a copy of Severn's drawing of the head, inscribed to her, if I remember correctly, by Laurence Hutton, a copy of the death mask, and many other things were embraced in the collection whose most personal feature was a lock of Keats's hair given her by a grandniece of the poet, then living in Spain. Miss Guiney linked this red-gold lock somewhat amusingly with the moderns by telling me that it was so identically the color of Bliss Carman's hair that when she tested the exactitude she would certainly have lost it had she not held firmly to the original! She told me that she had willed her Keats collection, as well as that of Stevenson and others, to the Bodleian Library, for she was already making those pilgrimages to England which resulted in a final residence there; and later, in one of my visits to her in Oxford, I found that these treasures had already been delivered to the library as she was moving about too much for their safety.

Not to anticipate this period, however, I left Miss Guiney on that winter morning with much the same feeling that animated Hazlitt when he walked along the country road with Coleridge and felt that life had been transfigured for him by his "first acquaintance with poets". It was not the books, the associations, stimulating as they were, but the charm and inspiration of this vivid personality in whom they became alive. For Miss Guiney, with a mind furnished so choicely and rarely, with scholarship which had led her to sources where most people have not the taste nor the ambition to go, was of all people the most unpedantic and of all temperaments the most spontaneous and charming. Her Celtic wit was ever at play, but quite unaware of itself, and her letters will one day take their place as literature, having at once that tang and pungency, shot through with humor, for which one would have to look to Charles Lamb for a parallel.

Not long after my visit to her, Miss Guiney and her mother moved back into Boston, her official period being over, and ensconced themselves in a "dear little dingy house" on Pinckney Street. Here she spent a year or so in the catalogue department of the Public Library, translating from early Italian and French texts and becoming, in so far as she would permit her-

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self, the centre of a small but characteristically Bostonian group. She was the especial favorite of Mrs. James T. Fields and of Sara Orne Jewett, then living with her, and of Louise Chandler Moulton whom, by reason of her name, she always called "godmother". Boston had yet somewhat of the waning splendor of the old days: Julia Ward Howe, though so advanced in years, was still at home on Thursdays; Colonel Higginson still presided over the Round Table; Mrs. Edwin P. Whipple, contemporary with Mrs. Howe, still drew about her the choice spirits who had frequented her home during the life of her brilliant husband; Margaret Deland who might, in comparison with these folk of yesterday, be called one of the younger members of the Beacon Hill colony, lived in a high-windowed house on Mount Vernon Street, lighted by golden jonquils whose flame must often have gladdened the eyes of Thomas Bailey Aldrich who lived directly across the street; while Louise Chandler Moulton, clinging to her sombre old house on Rutland Square, made it the magnetic centre where, on Friday afternoons from fall until spring, new and old Boston met together.

Miss Guiney through taste and tradition belonged chiefly to the latter group, having somewhat the same place in it that Hartley Coleridge held among the friends of his father. It was Mrs. Moulton who characterized her most aptly at the time as "a slight, blue-eyed girl, delicate as a wild rose and elusive as a thistledown"; for with all her arts of enchantment, she knew well how to escape from exactions and had in her something of the fay, so that even the closest friend could never feel quite sure that she would not vanish like a sprite when she should be most palpable. It was this spiritual defense, which most of us are too compliant to exercise, that kept her from being absorbed in the currents which would have swept her away from her essential self, and it was primarily at the call of this self that she left Boston soon after for several years' stay in England. This was not yet her final residence there, but an intermediate period, spent largely in London where she and her mother had for a time the house of Harold Frederic. Here she had among her closest friends Dora Sigerson,—Mrs. Clement Shorter,—the Gosses, and many others who made up the London life of the day. Miss Guiney had previously made several short trips to England during one of which she and Alice Brown, who was her warmest American comrade of her own age, had taken a walking trip of several weeks which resulted in Miss Brown's volume "By Oak and Thorn"; but she continued to come back until her mother's death severed the binding tie which held her to this country. In the winter of 1909-10 she returned to Oxford, her favorite home in England, and wrote me soon after that she had "become a mere mole of the enchanted Bodleian". Here she was not called upon to be contemporary, as in America, and could indulge her taste for exploring the bypaths of human thought—for what more fascinating pursuit than to be a mole of the Bodleian? Yet this designation might wrong her to those who did not know that she was still a creature made of fire and dew, for she seemed to me much more like an air plaint held to earth by so slender a stem that one scarcely realizes that its roots are in the soil.

It so chanced that I was in Oxford several seasons in succession before

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the war, in each of which I saw Miss Guiney. On the last of these visits (in 1913, when she was living at Longwall Cottage), having spent a Sunday afternoon roaming about the towered city, pausing to look up at Pater's windows in Baliol, we held our way to the old cemetery and stood long by the spot where he lies, with just a path between him and the grave of Romanes.

During the war she wrote me that she was leaving Oxford for the Cotswold country, and it was there, at the little town of Chipping-Camden, that she died.

During her last period in America, in 1909, Miss Guiney collected and brought out her volume "Happy Ending", containing what she regarded as the most important poems from her earlier books. With her finely exacting taste, she eliminated all of the earlier work whose mood she had outgrown or which seemed not to represent her, and preserved only the more mature and characteristic work by which she was known. Many poems, therefore, treasured by her early admirers, are not in "Happy Ending", but one would hesitate to add them to the volume which received the stamp of finality from her own hand. As the title implies, Miss Guiney thought her lyric period was over and seemed definitely, with the publication of this volume, to take farewell of her art. As she was still under fifty and her work at its very height, it seemed unlikely that she would abandon it, but with the exception of an occasional poem in the American magazines, "Happy Ending" was true to its title; and one can only hope she has left something in manuscript which may come as a final message from her.

Miss Guiney's work is too fine and demands too much of the reader ever to make a popular appeal, and herein lies its best assurance for the future. It will always gather about it the discriminating few who will be the arbiters of tomorrow. It draws richly for its sources upon the beauty of yesterday, reaching back at times to an archaic simplicity which, because it is strange to our modern ears, seems like sophistication. No style so personal, so distinctive, has appeared in poetry in recent years, and it is safe to say that no individuality has so shaped the expression of its art. Her touch both in prose and poetry is unmistakable, nor could one mistake the temperament behind it. With all her passion for letters, her passion for life was greater, and her verse is instinct with a zest that invigorates like a breath of mountain air. Knowing always the struggle inseparable from work which could never appeal to the crowd, she still held her way gladly and made her wants commensurate with the return which life had made her. She symbolizes herself and her mood toward life in her poem of the poplar:

> Yet, branches never parted
> From their straight, secret bole,
> Yet, sap too single-hearted,
> Prosper as my soul.
>
> In loneliness, in quaint
> Perpetual constraint,
> In gallant poverty,
> A girt and hooded tree,
> See if against the gale
> Our leafage can avail:
> Lithe, equal, naked, true,
> Rise up as spirits do,
> And be a spirit crying
> Before the folk that dream!
> My slender, early-dying
> Poplar, by the stream.

Miss Guiney knew well how to fence with life, how to disarm fate with gayety, how to meet limitation from the inexhaustible resources of Beauty, and this is all in her work—is, indeed, the heart of her work, for any seeker to find. Scarcely a poem but bears wit-

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ness to her spiritual encounters, but all by indirection; for no one was less didactic. Three notes predominate in her work: the valorous note, the Celtic note, and the mystical note, expressed at its best in "Beati Mortui", that beautiful salutation to the dead:

Not passed but perfected,
Who win from pain their strange and flawless grant
Of peace anticipant.

The casual reader might not know that she was brought up in the tradition of the Church, as he would be sure to know this fact, for example, from the poetry of Francis Thompson, for Thompson uses constantly the symbolism of the Church and casts over his work its richness, like an encrusted vestment. Miss Guiney, on the contrary, while no less an adherent of the ancient faith, expresses always in her poetry its inner rather than its outer aspect, thus holding more closely to the universal. Such acquiescence in the shaping Force of life, coming from one who without such acquiescence might have been broken by it, is rarely met elsewhere, and she who knew so well how, in the disparity of things, one may be

Sick with the impact of eternity,

could say with serenity that one is a part of the great pageant "made in joy to pass" and should not

...the privilege disown
To flourish fair and fall fair, and be strown
Deep in that Will of God, where blend
The origin of beauty and the end.

There is one of Miss Guiney's lyrics which has for me a peculiar appeal, not only for its beauty but because it hints so deeply of an inner mood seldom permitted to appear in her work. It is one of the Oxford poems, "The Yew-Tree":

As I came homeward
At merry Christmas,
By the old church tower
Through the churchyard grass,

And saw there circled
With graves all about,
The yew-tree paternal,
The yew-tree devout,—

Then this hot life-blood
Was hard to endure,
O Death! so I loved thee,
The sole love sure.

For stars slip in heaven,
They wander, they break;
But under the yew-tree
Not one heartache.

And ours, what failure
Renewed and avowed!
But ah, the long-buried
Is leal, and is proud.
.....

At eve, overlooking
The smooth chilly tide,
With age-hidden meaning
The yew-tree sighed,

By the square grey tower,
In the short grey grass,
As I came homeward
At merry Christmas.

Such fine spirits as Miss Guiney, touched to such fine issues, appear rarely, but when they come they make a sanctuary for us from all that is petty, and when they go they carry us a step nearer to the source of Loveliness.

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APROPOS OF THE REVIVAL OF "THE BEGGAR'S OPERA"

BY ANNIE NATHAN MEYER

IT was Horace Walpole's opinion that while tragedy could never suffer by delay, a comedy may, because the allusions or the manners represented in it may be temporary. But the production of "The Beggar's Opera" this season at the Greenwich Village Theatre, New York, shows that it is possible for wit and satire to possess sufficient vitality to remain alive for two hundred years, even if shorn of the biting sarcasm of contemporaneity. The Gilbertian or Chestertonian twist whereby a situation is treated from a contrary angle, seems to be perennially amusing, and it would seem that the tastes, habits, and peccadillos of men have not changed so vastly considering the number of years that have swept over their sinful heads!

New York's latest revival of Gay's immortal opera (there will be no harm done if the printer here decides to omit a *t!*) is thoroughly delightful. And the sheer loveliness of the old ballads yields but another lesson in the permanence of all Beauty. Even to an ear steeped in the gorgeous color of Tschaikowsky, and attuned to the cacophonies and strange elusive groupings of Cyril Scott, the delicate arias of another day have extraordinary charm, especially when they are sung so delightfully as by the present cast. While the elaboration of the instrumentation by Frederic Austin has been done with great distinction and reverence, nevertheless I, for one, would like to have heard the voices with only the original accompaniments in their naive, unarabesqued form. The early accompaniments were thin, I grant you, but the charm of eighteenth century music lay largely in its tenuousness. The power and depth of mass in music, note superimposed upon note and instrument upon instrument, is for us of today. There is the glory of the old music. And there is the glory of the new. How I enjoyed the lovely ladies!—real Hogarthian ladies—at last I have seen them with mine own eyes! There was Mistress Peachum, it would seem, straight from "The Rake's Progress" with her outward airs and graces and inner rottenness. And the young and lovely ladies with that queer, slanting courtesy, their hoops all to one side, giving them that frail, delicate appearance as flowers wilting at a breath. One could find it in one's heart not to be too severe with the uxorious hero, for while he sang the delightful refrain "How happy could I be with either, were t'other dear charmer away" to Polly and Lucy alone, there was provocation enough to have endited the song to all eight of the charmers.

Mr. Huneker, in writing last summer of the London revival, rendered

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anxious no doubt by prohibition and rumors of the activities of the Sabbath Day Alliance, expressed his dread of a "Bowdlerized" "Beggar's Opera", should we ever get it here at all. But fortunately the undertaking is in the hands of Arthur Hopkins whose grim production of Gorky's "Night Lodging" proved he possesses a proper respect for masterpieces. A few scenes were omitted in the present performance, but there was the excellent excuse of our "lack of leisure"; and if a few words seemed a bit too strong to stomach, such as *belly*, *bawd*, and *strumpet*, enough were left such as *wench* and *hussy* to retain the flavor. I noticed the audience decidedly sat up when the epithet *slut* was applied by that rascal Peachum to his pretty daughter—pretty enough in all conscience to quite explain her prototype becoming the toast of the town and carrying off the Duke of Bolton in lawful matrimony.

True, we are no longer concerned with the wrangling which greeted the first appearance of "The Beggar's Opera". We of today enjoy the performance as an escape from the life which begins to press too heavily upon us, rather than as a corrective to folly or an incentive thereto. There are always these two currents in art—one that turns aside from the problems of the moment, the other that faces them. The works of one class we may call for want of a better word—sedatives. The others at times present themselves as panaceas or again bob up as mere crude statements of facts with no thought of solution. Thus in the theatre today we have our Shaw and our Barrie; our Galsworthy and our very own Clare Kummer, an American Barrie, younger, less resigned to life, with the deliciousness and gay irresponsibility of a child, while underneath the wistful whimsies of Barrie, the knowing sense the heartbreak of experience.

But to its contemporaries "The Beggar's Opera" was anything but a sedative. What a to-do there was! Statesmen, dignitaries of church and bar, dukes and duchesses, court favorites and exiles, wits and witlings, managers and whole companies, all passionately ranged on one side or other of the controversy. Swift in Gay's favor wrote in the "Intelligencer":

> He hath placed vices of all kinds in the most odious light, and thereby done eminent service both to religion and morality. Upon the whole, I deliver my judgment that nothing but servile attachment to a party, affectation of singularity, lamentable dullness, mistaken zeal, or studied hypocrisy, can have the least reasonable objection against the excellent moral performance.

There was nothing half-hearted or mealy-mouthed about Dean Swift's partisanship! But he was promptly rebuked by a pamphleteer:

> The sentiments do very well consist with the character of a man of whom it may with justice be said that scarce anyone of his profession whose writings are of equal bulk with those of Swift, has, as an author, contributed less than he to the promotion of religion, virtue, or the general interests of mankind.

However, fascinating as it is, I dare not indulge in anecdote for fear of paying but a poor compliment to the readers of THE BOOKMAN, seeing that for several weeks past the daily press has been filled with references to Addison, Swift, Pope, Dr. Johnson, Colley Cibber, and Dr. Abuthnot whose names have become as familiar as those of prize-fighters, bandits, burglars, suicides, politicians, multi-millionaires, and other of the heroes of contemporary journalism.

Perhaps, however, I may indulge myself to the extent of one anecdote which so far I believe has remained unquoted, the pretty retort of Mr. Garrick to the justice who would have the

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actor-manager discontinue the revival of the opera in 1773. His Honor had angrily warned that any hesitation on Garrick's part showed that it was a struggle between his morality and his interests. To which Garrick had instantly replied, "He was sorry he could not return the compliment, for the *judge's interests and his morality were never at variance!*"

While we of today may not be able to enter into all the fine shades of the discussion, yet if we know the period at all, it is not difficult to realize that Gay's opera was a great innovation—an innovation and a challenge. Whether or not it was written to lambaste the extravagances of the Italian opera (I am old enough to have enjoyed hugely the fun of its overelaborate and utterly inconsistent struttings and posings!), whether or not the rascality of the characters pointed directly at the rascality of certain officers of the Crown, there was certainly more than enough left in the production to take the town by the ears. To begin with, it was an opera in English, so the spectator could actually follow the singing with his understanding as well as his emotions. Had not Mr. Addison been protesting this long time that a mere translation from the Italian was not enough, that in fact it left the audience in worse case than before, with the music which originally fit declarations of undying devotion, now absurdly coupled with declarations of equally undying hate?

> It happens very frequently that the necessary transposition of words made the music appear very absurd in one tongue. I remember an Italian phrase that ran
>
> "And turn'd my rage into pity"
>
> which the English, for the rhyme sake translated
>
> "And into pity turn'd my rage."
>
> Thus the soft notes that were adapted to pity in the Italian fell upon the word "rage" in English.... It often happened, too, that the finest notes in the air fell upon the most insignificant words.... I have known the word "and" pursued through the whole gamut, have been entertained with many a melodious "the" and have heard the most beautiful graces, quavers, and divisions bestowed upon "thus", "for", and "from", to the eternal honour of our English Particles!

Then, too, Gay provided a chorus which entered into the action of the play instead of standing about awkwardly with no relation to what was going on, unless to raise solemn, protesting hands, or bend stiff knees, herded off into one corner by themselves. Moreover, when the people of the play spoke, they talked as men and women do in real life.

"I hope I may be forgiven," in the short prologue ventures Gay's author-beggar unctuously, "that I have not made my opera throughout unnatural, like those in vogue, for I have no recitative."

Sir John Hawkins agrees with Gay in his voluminous "History of Music": "How is it possible to avoid being tired with the recitative which has neither the charm of singing, nor the agreeable energy of speech?"

Nevertheless the austere Sir John waxed indignant at "the immoral sentiments of 'The Beggar's Opera', and the pernicious effect of its run". Again, most revolutionary, the theme of the opera concerned itself with the doings of strumpets, procurers, pimps, and pickpockets. Utterly without shame was Gay to ask the gentry to interest themselves in the affairs of such low people. We find three years later Lillo apologetically requesting a hearing for his play "George Barnewell":

> The Tragic Muse, sublime, delights to show
> Princes' distrust, and scenes of royal woe;
> In awful pomp, majestic, to relate
> The fall of nations, or some hero's fate.
> .....
> Forgive me, then, if we attempt to show
> In artless strains, a tale of private woe.
> A London 'Prentice ruined is our theme.

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Snobbishness in literature dies hard. Nearly seventy years after this an editorial review of "Lyrical Ballads" thus rebukes the poet Wordsworth:

> The author shall style his rustic delineations of low life poetry, if he pleases, on the same principle on which Teniers is called a painter ...but are the Dutch boors of Teniers to be compared with the angels of Raphael and Guido?

Here we see near the opening of the nineteenth century the dead hand of the Grand Manner still resting heavily upon art. The highest art was supposed to concern itself only with that which was universal. Observation of environment, however acute, was like lead on the feet of Pegasus who was supposed to soar high above the mere exigencies of the moment. Thus we understand the opinion of Walpole quoted at the beginning of this article. The once authoritative, clear-cut divisions of art expression have dissolved. Today a tragedy like "John Ferguson" or "Beyond the Horizon" is more saturated in local color than a comedy like "The Admirable Crichton". Thus, it is all just a little amusing to modern ears, this passion for definition, this splitting of hairs. In Gay's preface to his tragi-comi-pastoral farce "Whatd'ye Call It?" he mocks at his own age:

> They deny it to be tragical because its Catastrophe is a Wedding, which hath ever been accounted comical.... They say the sentiments are not tragical because they are of the lowest country people...and because the end of Tragedy is supposed to soften the Mind of Man from its Natural Obduracy and Haughtiness, but this Moral, say they, seems calculated to flatter the Audience in their Vanity and Self-Conceitedness.

The twentieth century does not grow excited over definitions. Let composers call their work symphonies, symphonic poems, poems, landscapes—what they will. Let writers call their carelessly thrown together notes novels, their catalogues poems. Here and there a small group may quarrel over vers libre, but what does it matter? But it all mattered very much a couple of hundred years ago. It was called an age of naïveté, but it was a naïveté of expression, not of thought. Craftsmanship in many art forms was being tested, tried out. Those who practised the arts—especially the art of fiction and the art of instrumental music—were as little children enamored of a new toy. We today are quite as naive with our handling of the aeroplane, we delight in discussions over the length of the wings, over the safest type of motor, quite as the eighteenth century discussed the correctness of a couplet, the length of a shake, or the question whether the human voice is really improved by the addition of the flute or oboe. They took themselves with great seriousness. Why not? We smile at their heat over attaining a naturalness on the stage which was in reality an excruciating degree of artificiality. I can fancy an age may come that will smile over the heat with which we of today discuss our democracy, a democracy which boasts of its free schools and libraries, but which suffers music and the drama to be practically tied to the dulled sensibilities of an aristocracy of wealth.

NOTE.—A new edition of "The Beggar's Opera" is published by B. W. Huebsch.

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THE LONDONER

Modern Printed Books on Show—Illustrated Books—Commercial Considerations—The Dull Season—New Novels—"The Age of Innocence"—Gilbert Frankau as Causeur—Bennett's New Book—Plagiarism in Titles—Katherine Mansfield and Rebecca West—The Stampede from London.

LONDON, *December* 1, 1920.

THE other month I described a visit which I had paid to an exhibition of printed books at the British Museum. Another exhibition of a comparable kind—in fact a complementary exhibition—is now being held in a big hall in Knightsbridge, and this has been quite worth visiting, although the quality of the exhibits is very various and not at all such as to make the connoisseur rub his eyes in marveling delight. This, however, may give a wrong impression. The collection is this time restricted to modern work, and some of the best of this is being shown. We have, it seems, some really creditable book production, in which attention is paid to all the details which go to make a nice-looking book. There are examples of both the Florence and the Riccardi Presses. Also, such older presses as those of Jacobi (The Chiswick Press) and Cobden-Sanderson are proved to have done work of which they have no need to be ashamed. Of them all, I prefer the books of the Riccardi Press, because, although this type tends in its smaller size to look congested, there is a delightful simplicity about its design, and close setting gives an air of clean distinction to the open page. Whether it is readable with ease is another matter. The Florence Press is lighter (it is an earlier venture of Mr. Horne's) and to some extent more graceful, but it is disfigured by several weaknesses. The presswork of the Riccardi Press is unusually good. A notable regularity of color is secured. Unfortunately many of the volumes are illustrated with modern collotype illustrations which are anomalous and mediocre.

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Illustrated books please me less and less as the years go by. They seem to be neither one thing nor the other, but interfere with the general appearance of good taste. It is so rare that an illustrator has the right feeling for literature or for the printed book. He does so many drawings, as a rule, because he has been paid to do them. Or he has been casting about for a book to illustrate, and regards his subject as a lucky find. There is with him no sense that here is a work which calls for genuine interpretation. He has no distinct "call" to make any drawings, and the drawings he does make are miserable travesties of his more ambitious works. They are too often undertaken without thought of reproductive processes, and even when these processes are considered (and it is rare that an artist has had training in the mechanical details of such

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work) the processes themselves are still so imperfect that they are incapable of doing justice to anything of any delicacy. Between the artist and the blockmaker (or the collotyper) the poor old book falls to the ground. In a plain text, without pictures, it might have been very well. But with type set close enough to present the air of being a solid block, and with terrifyingly feeble drawings, reproduced inadequately, an illustrated book of any pretensions is almost surely unsatisfactory.

This was the case with many of the books I saw in Knightsbridge. Their leaves had been opened by intelligent assistants at the places which showed the illustrations. The stoutest eye recoiled from them with horror. The effect was too ghastly. When, in addition, we fancied that the type page was something less than distinguished, there was such pathetic futility about the exhibit that it was best passed in silence. Not all the books, however, were of this kind, and the collection as a whole was almost reassuring. It showed that taste was not wholly dead in the land. It might be feeble, but it was not dead. If more such exhibitions could be held, and if modern books could be shown cheek by cheek with the better (or the best) old ones, we might really have something in the nature of a general improvement in taste.

* * * *

In connection with my remarks about printing of a few months back, I was told by a publisher with genuine taste that present-day conditions are such as to prohibit the well-printed book. This is quite true. Most publishers have to make their books pay, and they have not the time or the money to give that individual attention to each book which alone can result in a uniformity of quality. I know what the difficulty is. There are not enough people of taste to go round in the publishing trade. There are too many who cannot tell the difference between what is good and what is bad. Even where there is judgment, there is no time for its exercise, and when printers are recalcitrant the only thing, if one is to get a book out at all, is to let it go at a stage when patience with the vagaries and the inevitable present-day prices of printers is at breaking point. If one is in business professionally, one must make a considerable proportion of one's bantlings commercially profitable, and if one is a mere dabbler one's resources are small, and one's temptation is to fiddle and niggle a book into silly niceties which destroy its robustness and its interest for more than the dilettante.

And yet, looking round the lists of the various publishers this year, I am inclined to wonder where all the good books go to. They do not appear in the lists. All I see, for the most part, is a mass of dull productions. I do not recall a duller season. Perhaps they are all dull, and the dulness of the present one is only emphatic because it is the one immediately under one's eye. Yet I cannot wholly believe this. There are certainly some outstanding books—Wells's "Outline", Colonel Repington's Reminiscences, Mrs. Asquith's singular production, and so on. But of novels there is a dearth—novels, that is, of any outstanding quality—and of books in belles-lettres there are two few to make the mind pause before committing itself to a sweeping condemnation. Here I am hearing a good deal about Mr. Rothenstein's "Literary Portraits", but I have not seen the book myself. They say that the one of Bennett is as good as the

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one of Wells is unlike. Wells's book on Russia is arousing much controversy. It is short, and it is provocative. Otherwise I should say that the book trade is inclined to be stagnant. One bookseller recently said that this was the worst season he had ever had. The reason is not only that people are drawing tight the necks of their purses. Nor is it that they are jibbing at the high prices of books. I believe the chief feature of the slump is that there are so few books upon the market which the public feels it *must* have. "The Athenæum" says that this is the fault of the booksellers. I think it lies elsewhere. The booksellers are flooded with books. They cannot show them all. They make the best choice they can, in accordance with their judgment. But what if there are no good books?

* * * *

I spoke disparagingly just now of the novels of the season. I ought not to forget that there are several of exceptional merit. Norman Douglas's "They Went" is moving some people to paroxysms of delight, although I have not yet come across anybody who pretends to understand what the book is about, or rather, what it means. D. H. Lawrence's "The Lost Girl" is full of surprisingly good things, but is surprisingly less than a good book. All who read it admit Lawrence's talent; but none of them feels quite happy about this particular exhibition of it. Oliver Onions has published a sensational novel in "A Case in Camera". Walpole's "The Captives" is definitely outstanding, and is also proving highly popular. Anthony Hope has emerged again with a charming tale called "Lucinda", in which his old grace is not reinforced by any new brilliance or vigor. Galsworthy's "In Chancery", beyond being well reviewed, does not seem to have made any deep impression upon the critics. A. P. Herbert's "The House by the River" has increased this young writer's reputation. I may by mischance have missed some one or other novel, but I cannot recall any more which have been remarked as having exceptional quality. Personally I found Mrs. Wharton's "The Age of Innocence" a good deal less good than her best work.

* * * *

"The Age of Innocence" falls, I think, between two stools. It is not wholly a social picture, and yet it is too much of a social picture to give full value to the simple emotional story which the book tells. This story is too lyrical to be sandwiched in a social picture. It is not a big enough story to transcend the picture or to shoot it through and through with new significance. It is a little story, told before, and it is quite lost in the pictures of New York in the 'seventies. And yet, of course, Mrs. Wharton writes with such calm distinction that one cannot help admiring her work, and wishing that the extraordinary qualities of "Ethan Frome" should have been communicable to the larger canvas. As it is her characters do not live. They are submerged, and their delineation is too cold to make them passionate spots in the slow narrative. They are not made into anything beyond little people who have had the misfortune to get forgotten and to be raked up out of the dust by Mrs. Wharton, with the dust still clinging to them and hiding their individual quality.

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I hear the melancholy news that Wells may after all be forced to abandon his trip to the United States. He is seriously ill as I write, and although by the time these words appear he will

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certainly be well again I doubt whether he will be sufficiently recovered to start upon the appointed date. Whether this will merely involve postponement or not I cannot say. Another writer in whom America takes an interest, although a recent one, is also in the position of having to abandon plans long made. This is Aldous Huxley, whose health has been seriously affected by overwork. Huxley is not laid up, and he was not going to America; but he has been forced to decide to spend a year in Italy, as the best means of recuperating. This sojourn, however, will probably have its benefits for Huxley's admirers, for he will be enabled to work steadily upon a novel, and this novel, which is described to me as "Peacockian", should be of unusual interest.

* * * *

The Book Causeries at Harrod's Stores, about which I recently wrote, seem to have been a great success. Many well-known writers put in an appearance, aired their views, autographed their books, and were seen by inquisitive readers wandering about like lions in the wilderness. One of the most amusing was Gilbert Frankau, who has been making innumerable public appearances lately. This young man started as a poet, before the war. He wrote a "novel in verse" called "One of Us" and then went on to conquer the fields already conquered by Kipling. He had a quick ear, a ready eloquence, and a vocabulary of the greatest ingeniousness. He then decided to become a novelist, as his mother, "Frank Danby", has been, and he has written three novels with mounting success. Not content with this, however, he has taken to politics, upon which he writes astoundingly in two London journals; and he is speaking at all sorts of meetings with the utmost readiness and sang-froid. He was at Harrod's, he was recently at a Woman's Club, and then again I see that he has been giving elsewhere his views upon the psychological novel. All this within a fortnight is not bad going. I sometimes wonder, when I observe the social activities of our young writers, what time they find in which to write their books.

Obscurely I sat at the back of the room in which Frankau discussed the short story with a number of other leading lights. I did not gather that any of those who spoke knew anything about the short story, but it pleased them to talk, and I suppose it pleased us to hear them talk. As to any profit which such discussion could have, I must not be pressed for an opinion. We had serious or humorous remarks from Cynthia Stockley, Frankau, G. B. Stern, Hamilton Fyfe, Sheila Kaye-Smith, Frank Swinnerton, Mary Webb, Alec Waugh, Victor Bridges, and half a dozen more whose names I did not know. And then we had something to eat. Personally I did well out of the evening, as I had a dinner beforehand; but for those who arrived hungry there cannot have been anything very satisfying in the casual discourses of all these young omniscients. Hugh Walpole was to have opened the debate, but it was announced, to an accompaniment of sympathetic laughter, that he had been debating all the afternoon with G. K. Chesterton, and was "too exhausted to come". All who had heard Chesterton speak—and I suppose everybody in the room had done that—quite well understood that to debate with him must be one of the most exhausting things to which a man could abandon himself. As a result, the debate was opened by Frankau, and Frankau had so many bees in his bonnet about editors and the word

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"was" that he sidetracked the whole discussion and turned it into an amusing variety entertainment. But the audience seemed to enjoy everything except the serious speakers, and so no doubt they traveled home well content.

* * * *

Arnold Bennett's new book, "Things that have interested me", will be out early in the new year. To anybody acquainted with Bennett the title will suggest an endless tome. It is a most unpretentious title, but its implications are enormous. At the end of the book there ought to be a blank page, indexed, "Things that have *not* interested Mr. Bennett", for I should find it very hard to suggest a topic which would come under that head. The book is a store of observation, opinion, and judgment. Many of the entries do not fill the page upon which they begin, but each entry is full of meat. I imagine that it would be possible to disagree with many of Bennett's *obiter dicta;* but no man would be found upon this side of the Atlantic who supposed that Bennett could touch any subject without showing it in an unfamiliar, or at least a convincingly familiar, light. Never in all my days have I been in the company of any man who understood so much about what he sees as Bennett. In him we get the proof of Poe's declaration that it is not the quantity of the observation that matters but the quality. Bennett's observation has quantity and quality as well. It is that which makes it so exceptional, and, to the docketing mind, so hard to command. The superior person dismisses this trait in Bennett as a sign of his provinciality; but we are all very scornful of qualities quite outside the range of our own talents. Except Bennett, who presents to such apparent impossibilities a bland curiosity and regard which straightway envelops them, so that they cease to be outside his range. It is a great trait. It is wonderful to contemplate such insatiable curiosity. Readers of "Things that have interested me" will realize what I mean.

Francis Brett Young's new novel was to have been called "The Conquering Hero"; but that title has just been used by another novelist, and so Brett Young will have to find another. I believe his book will be called "Black Diamonds".

* * * *

This question of titles is a remarkable one. I often wonder that when one has chosen a title everybody else does not immediately think of the same title. Very rarely does this anticipation occur, however. What happens as a rule is that once the title has been used everybody sees it as the only possible name for his own newest work. The titles of three of my books have been used afterward by other authors. This is an uncomfortable reflection, because it suggests that one works in secret, and confirms one's suspicion that nobody ever hears of one's books. But if royalty statements contradict this thought then there can be only two alternative explanations. Either later writers are the subjects of unconscious memory, or they are most careless, in choosing a title, to make sure that it is available. Unfortunately there is no copyright in titles. Novelists will continue to go black in the faces with rage at seeing their own titles used again by hardy adventurers in the fiction market; but they have no redress. Moreover, it is often hard to discover if a title has been used or not. The search takes time, and even some professional skill, and as novelists as a class, apart from a very few, are among the most ignorant people in the world, I suppose that unconscious plagiarism and indigna-

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tion will be their lot for the rest of time. Very rarely does a celebrated title get used again. On the other hand some very famous names have gained fresh lustre from modern reuse. I would instance "The Old Wives' Tale" and "Marriage".

* * * *

The one book of this season which has been praised to me with genuine fervor is Katherine Mansfield's collection of short stories called "Bliss". It is published by Constable. Katherine Mansfield is the wife of Middleton Murry, the editor of "The Athenæum", and she has long been known in the inner circles of literary London as a first-rate short story writer. Unfortunately for a very long time she has been in indifferent health, and this has hampered the progress of her literary work. It is, I suppose, no secret that Katherine Mansfield is the writer responsible for those caustic reviews of novels which are a weekly feature of "The Athenæum". Woe to the solemn novelist whose work comes before her. Short shrift is his lot. I have met novelists who have just read a review of their new novel signed "K. M." I have read reviews of my own works from that devastating pen. It is a strange thing that the best reviewing of novels which has appeared in the public press for the past few years has been the product of two women—Katherine Mansfield and Rebecca West. Their opinions, I should say, rarely coincide—it would be too much to expect from women so definite in mind and personality—but of the brilliance of their writing, and the terribly destructive character of their insights there can be only two opinions. I have heard both freely expressed. The first is that they are vulgar women. The second is that they are the only novel reviewers worth reading. As a novel reviewer of some experience, I plump for the second view.

Speaking of Rebecca West reminds me that her long-promised novel "The Judge" still remains uncompleted, although various statements about it have appeared in the London press. The truth is that Rebecca West has gone to Capri with Mrs. Compton Mackenzie in order to work undisturbed upon the book and bring it to a worthy end. This of course means the loss to London journalism of her stimulating appearances as literary critic in the "Daily News", "New Statesman", and "Star" and as dramatic critic in a rather puzzling paper called "Time and Tide". "Time and Tide" was started as a feminine journal, and I suppose the significance of the title to lie in the fact that while male contributors were permitted by the management they were not regarded as essential. Rebecca West's articles on the theatre, without revealing any special knowledge of the theatre, have been easily the most interesting things in the paper.

* * * *

It will be seen that all our young writers are deserting the country of their birth. I wish I could do this myself. Lawrence is in Sicily, Mackenzie is in Herm, Huxley and Rebecca West are going or have gone to Italy, Brett Young is permanently in Capri, and Walpole is going there for a "stop", as Daisy Ashford would say. Robert Nichols is going to Tokio to take the place once occupied by Lafcadio Hearn, Cannan is to reside in France, and the air is full of stirrings and flittings. How lonely it will be in London! How rare and welcome shall we who remain become to the tea parties! At last our day will have arrived, and we shall live basking in the lap of luxury and fussing. I am tempted to fly to the Antipodes!

SIMON PURE

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CARAVANING WITH BOOKS

BY MARY FRANK

DREAMS to sell! Dreams to sell!" Like the very cry of a modern fairy-tale magician might have sounded the shrill pipe of the Book Caravan as it tooted its way through quiet old New England. The huge grey car with orange curtains fluttering from its windows received an amazed stare that went nearly all the way around Cape Cod. It was not until we had left the elm-sheltered cottages of Barnstable, salty and colorful Provincetown, Chatham with its lighthouses and windmills, and had reached the metropolitan Hyannis that we suddenly heard a shout—"Oh, there goes *that* Caravan!"

Then descended upon us a jolly party of tourists. We stopped as they haled, and they all piled in. "Is this really 'Parnassus on Wheels'? We've read the story but we never dreamed there was one." But alas, grownups are quite as literal as children, and they wanted it to be "just like it was in the story". Why dash the reawakened faith in romance, and disillusion those simple trusting souls who would rather have the fictions than the realities of life? Whenever I confessed that we did not sleep aboard I wished that Roger Mifflin might have had more of a liking for bed and bath. We suffered by comparison. However, we had more than one reason to be grateful to Roger for sending us many of his admirers. He had cultivated the book-buying habit in them too.

We had another friend who proved our sponsor wherever we went. The Boston "Transcript" is read religiously throughout New England. Backed by its approval of our "missionary" purpose, we were graciously received not only on the Massachusetts north shore, but all along the sea coast to Bar Harbor; and as we made our way inland over country roads that nearly shivered our timbers, through Maine to the White and Green Mountains, we were gladdened by a friendly wave from road or farmhouse. It delighted the feminist heart to observe the effect produced by the woman-manned caravan on the rural population. Slowly from the mouths of the gapers came the pipes. As we passed them on the road we could not hear all their remarks, but we have reason to believe that we were "out to educate the women how to vote".

There was of course the more inquisitive native. At a summer resort the native had to be quite inquisitive to overcome his shyness of the summer visitor. The few Cape Codders who came to us are memorable.

NOTE.—The Book Caravan, first of its kind, was sent out to tour New England by the Women's Educational and Industrial Union of Boston through its Bookshop for Boys and Girls. A number of publishers cooperated in the enterprise by subscribing the cost of the car. Bertha Mahony, director of the Bookshop, planned and directed its activities at the Boston headquarters. Genevieve Washburn drove the car. Mary Frank was in charge of the Caravan en route.

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"Know Joe Lincoln? 'Course I do. What's that last book o' his? 'The Portygee'! Huh! Who wants to read about a Portygee? I can go down the street and see all the Portygees I've a mind to without readin' about them. Besides, I can't read unless I'm settin' up straight, and I don't like to set up straight so I don't do much readin'." And there was an iceman who came up to us cautiously. "What you sellin' —books? I wonder if you have a history of Ireland?" He looked apologetic, but I assured him that while we did not have one, I could order it and have it sent to his home. "Could you, now? I used to own a history of Ireland. My ancestors came from there. It was a big green book with lots of pictures. But I lost it. And I vowed that if *I ever owned a book again* it would be a history of Ireland. How much would one cost? Well if you think you could get me one for two dollars I'd be willin' to order it." Then there was a forester in a hamlet in the White Mountains who had never traveled "except on the screen" and who thought three dollars none too much to pay for a history of his beloved mountains.

The Summer Visitor! Capitalized in more ways than one. Those who go to the ostentatiously large and expensive hotels care little for books. While the men golf the women sit on the piazzas and gossip. A deadly dull existence, than which illiteracy is scarcely a worse condition! Detective stories for the men, and either the wholesome sweet story, or one that is clever and spicy, for the women. Sometimes a specific book makes its appeal. I was summoned outside one day by the driver of a splendid equipage wherein sat a grande dame peering through a lorgnette. "Have you a book called—now let me think—'The Princess of Thule'—that's it. No? Well I had better order it. My little granddaughter has been named Sheila after the heroine and I want to read it before giving it to her." Occasionally there would come a world-weary woman betraying a wistful interest carefully disguised by a sophisticated exterior. She had to have something thoroughly up to date, one of the latest; but with something in it worth thinking about. She was quick to respond to the appeal of Walpole, Swinnerton, Galsworthy.

The children of the porch-sitters were left to nurse-maids or governesses of varying degrees of intelligence. On the whole they were well cared for, and given the opportunity to enjoy the Caravan whose arrival they hailed with glee. Too often they reflected the restless spirit of adult life with an uncompromising demand for "something exciting". Girls as well as boys not more than ten years old had to have the latest mystery or detective story written for juveniles, or else the latest of an innocuous series story. I was busy one afternoon trying to supply a petulant spoiled child with her want, when in burst Marie, a vivacious Cuban who had spent the morning browsing over the shelves with her brother. Both children had made a careful selection and asked to have the books put aside for them. The boy had returned shortly with a disappointed look and only two dollars, so he had to confine himself to one book. But astute Marie brought her mother with her. She was able not only to buy her bird guide and Pyle's "Stolen Treasure", but succeeded in interesting her mother in a lovely edition of Stockton's "Fanciful Tales". Here she was back again, this time with her monthly allowance of ten dollars, six of which she proceeded

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to invest in more books. The child's instinctive love and appreciation of good books did not fail to make its impression on the spoiled darling whose range was unfortunately limited.

It was not the indolent rich who bought most of our books, but the little group known as the "professional class". We know how little money this group has, squeezed as it is between those profiteers, Capital and Labor. These are the people who would prefer to pay two dollars for a book rather than for a pair of silk stockings, and yet who often exclaimed as they looked in upon us, "I daren't come in for I shall be tempted to buy, and I can't afford any more books just now." Then in they would come, unable to resist.

There was the school teacher who, after lingering over Celia Thaxter's "Isle of Shoals" said, "This will give me more permanent pleasure than if I took the trip I've been planning to the island over yonder. I can't have both, so I'll take the book." The Caravan brought a collection of children's books carefully selected and with many beautiful editions, to numerous teachers who had no opportunity to come in contact with just such a collection, cut off as they were in rural districts from bookstores containing desirable children's literature, and from libraries with a representative and attractive collection of children's books.

Often genuine sacrifices were made in order to possess the coveted treasures. I saw one mother, an artist, take aside her two daughters each of whom held close a chosen volume. The elder girl was perhaps thirteen, living in a world of romance. Her book was "Undine", illustrated by Rackham. The younger, a sturdy practical girl of ten, wanted Fabre's "Insect Adventures".

"Well, girls, it's a case of living on bread and milk for a week," said the mother. "Are you willing?" They eagerly assented and the books became their own.

Children's books held half the interest of Caravan visitors. There were days when the children took almost complete possession. At a bathing beach with pavilions spread from either side we looked so like a winged ship that one of the children in our wake cried, "Can you fly?" Another drew near. "How long will you be here?" he asked.

"Just today."

"When will you come around again?"

"Perhaps next summer."

"Not before then?"

"I'm afraid not."

"Then I think I'll stay till you go." Stay he did and managed to read three books before the day was over.

Adult fiction was naturally most in demand. People on vacation want recreational reading. Conrad, Hergesheimer, Walpole, Swinnerton, were the favorite authors of most; a happy medium between the purposeful preference for "Jean-Christophe" and "Pelle the Conqueror" on the one hand and the popular clamor for Joseph Lincoln, Archibald Marshall, and the late Mrs. Porter on the other. We discovered that Mrs. Porter's popularity in New England is largely accounted for by the fact that "she was a Cambridge woman, you know"; therefore homage was her due.

Poetry makes its special appeal in vacation time, and anthologies were second only to the popular novel.

"Have you Jessie Rittenhouse's last anthology?" queried a hiker as he peered in the doorway.

"Yes indeed, would you like it?" I said.

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"Oh no, I don't want it. I have it. But I wanted to prove to myself that you wouldn't have it."

"Won't you come in and look at our poetry shelf?" I suggested.

"No, no. I should have to walk all the way home if I indulged," he said.

It was too late. I was already offering him Louis Untermeyer's "American Anthology" and he succumbed to temptation.

There was a healthy zest for bird and flower guides. The nature lovers were glad to discover W. H. Hudson and Henri Fabre, while Burroughs was greeted as an old friend. John Muir's "Steep Trails" led them to travel. Beebe's "Jungle Peace" and Tomlinson's "Old Junk" proved attractive, and of course "White Shadows in the South Seas" proved our most fascinating volume. Everything of Roosevelt's was wanted, from his life and letters to his "Strenuous Life" in an Ariel booklet. I sold that to a little girl who had been given a dollar to get something by Roosevelt for her father. The "Autobiography" sold as rapidly as "White Shadows". "An American Idyll", "Eminent Victorians", Henry James's "Letters", and "The Education of Henry Adams" were foremost in biographical interest.

Across the back of the car was a window seat, over which hung, framed, a fragment of Opal Whiteley's diary. Probably no one thing, not the well-filled shelves, nor the cretonne-covered chairs in the front of the car, nor the books displayed on the reading table, —not one of these attractions produced the sensation which this scrap of cardboard with its almost illegible scrawl, called forth. I was surprised by the intensity of feeling with which people greeted it. The thing stirred them to such vehement expression that I found myself studying the effect on them, and that led to classifying their reactions. What was it—lack of imagination, lack of faith in human nature in general and childhood in particular, a distrust of potentialities—that was given vent in their denunciations of the "fraud", as they sneered, or turned away with a down-turned smile and a cynical shrug? "There have been doubters since the birth of Christ," said a clergyman, as he turned sadly away. But an artist said of the self-sufficient critics, "Theirs is the commonplace mind resenting the unusual. They cannot comprehend it and would say it does not exist, since they shut it out of their conscious recognition."

People wanted to get as far away as possible from the problems of the day. Gibbs's "Now It Can Be Told" and Keynes's "The Economic Consequences of the Peace" were the only exceptions to the disinterest in political affairs. I remember selling a copy of the Keynes book to a Catholic priest who lived in one of the most conservative of pioneer New England towns. Shortly after he withdrew to his little white house adjoining the green where we camped, came his colleague, an old man in a wheel chair. He had lost a leg in a recent operation, and as yet had no crutches. He wheeled himself around the Caravan.

"Ah it's a great thing for you gurls to be seein' the country this way," he remarked, with a beneficent smile.

"I'm sorry you can't come in and see our shop, Father," I said. "But perhaps I might bring you out some books to look at?"

"Ah no, dear, I can't read," he said. "I've been wearin' these dark spectacles ever since the operation."

"Well then, how would you like me to read something to you?" I said.

It was a warm lazy day, and we were camped under a spreading chestnut tree.

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"I'd like that fine," he said.

"What shall I read?" I asked.

"An Irish folk tale," said he.

So we had a Donegal fairy tale, and when that was finished we had a heart to heart talk.

"Tell me dear, are ye a Catholic?" he said.

"No Father, I'm not" (regretfully).

"Well never mind...here's hopin' ye die one."

As we proceeded on our sentimental journey, penetrating to the villages of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont that thrive regardless of the summer visitor, we rejoiced to find ourselves a community event. An Episcopalian minister in a little Maine village where there was neither bookstore nor library, announced our arrival from his pulpit, with the result that everyone came to the Common where we were stationed, and the children swarmed all day. Most of these had books in their homes, appreciated them, and added more when given the opportunity. In another village the mayor, who was editor of the leading paper and a library trustee, rallied all his forces to us. School children went home to bring parents who had never seen a bookstore before.

"What do you think of this here Caravan comin' to town and takin' our trade away?" asked one storekeeper of a town bookseller.

"Pooh, one day's trade can't hurt us," the bookseller replied. "Besides it gets people excited about books and brings us more trade in the long run."

He went a step further. That evening appeared an advertisement in the local paper to this effect:

"The Book Caravan is coming to town. Don't fail to visit it. But don't forget that, whereas the Book Caravan is on the Square one day in the week, THE ACORN BOOK SHOP is on the Square every day." His ad brought a curious reflex. In burst a French Canadian who worked in a steam laundry. She was breathless with haste.

"Have you got 'The Mysterious Marriage'—it's no. 24—a sequel to 'A Leap in the Dark' by Mrs. Southworth?" Disappointed she turned away, but a tide of similar requests came flowing in. "Peck's Bad Boy", "Elsie Dinsmore", and "The Winkle Twins" were wanted by a Sunday School teacher who was looking for inexpensive books. An elderly woman spent an afternoon before a shelf of western stories. Presently she began to talk. "I had a boy once who went out west to live. He stayed two years. Then he came back and was with me for a year. 'Mother', he said, 'if you would read them stories about the west you'd get an idea why I like it so.' He went back. That was ten years ago, and I've never heard a word of him since. I don't know whether he's dead or alive. But I keep reading the western stories."

She was one of the few to buy a western story. Certain red-blooded tales, sentimental and melodramatic, so much in demand at libraries, were passed over by book-buyers. Either they bought books because they knew them, loved them, and wanted to own them, or because they did not know them but wanted to. These were the ones who were reaching out hungrily toward nutriment for a richer and more intelligent way of life.

"I want a book for my boy who is going to college," said a woman in a mountain village.

"Oh," I said, steering her away from the children's corner, "you will want something from this side then, won't you?"

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"Oh no," she replied. "He's only ten. But I want him to start right."

Then came the hunt for the book he should have, within range of one dollar. I blessed the publishers who had just such a boy in their subconscious minds when they produced "Treasure Island", "Kidnapped", and "Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea" in attractive and inexpensive editions. I winced whenever a parent who had been brought to the Caravan by an eager schoolchild turned regretfully away, unable to afford the open sesame.

I am left with many questions and few conclusions. Why not develop an American Mudie's? Isn't it possible to have more books in cheap and attractive editions, widely distributed? Why not conserve, and publish less of the ephemeral movie drama which nobody wants to own? For, and this is my only conclusion—and it is in the nature of a faith restored—just as surely as human beings long to be nobler than themselves, just as surely do they want books which fortify and sustain that desire.

THE SKETCH BOOK

DISCIPLINING O. HENRY

By William Johnston

THERE was once a western artist, come to New York, who at first wrote home glowing letters about the various literary celebrities he was meeting, but there came a time when to a brother artist he ruefully remarked:

"It's best to know these chaps only by their writings. Once you get acquainted with them, they're just like everybody else."

With equal truth it may be said that no recollections of intimate friends ever give the insight into a departed author's real personality half so well as do his letters. Especially does this apply to a man of innate shyness who perpetually cloaked his personality with a gentle reserve that seldom was penetrated. Indeed, each time I read some new recollections of "an intimate friend of O. Henry", I always picture his ghost sitting somewhere over a celestial highball—they must have highballs there or it wouldn't be heaven for him—smiling sarcastically. For Sydney Porter, gentle, lovable, talented though he was, had no intimate friends. Stunned perhaps by the hard blows that life had dealt him, there was none to whom he revealed himself without reserve, to whom he confided his hopes, his ambitions, his estimate of himself.

While the writer (for a period of nearly three years his editorial taskmaster, exacting from him a story a week as per contract) perforce saw him often, and while this acquaintanceship was further cemented by frequent luncheons and dinners, and by evenings spent over the pool table or in the bowling alleys, nothing in the memories of this personal contact is half so revealing of the real O. Henry

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as some cherished letters, fragments of an almost daily correspondence carried on for many months.

The task of providing an original story each week was an arduous one for even as prolific a writer as O. Henry; yet his letters explaining why the stories were late in being delivered, show almost as much his powers of invention as do the tales themselves. Sometimes his excuse was a visitor who stayed overlong. The next time it would be something about "dizziness on rising", and again a thrilling account of "Colonel Bright and his justly celebrated disease", candor compelling him to say in conclusion: "Good old doc says it ain't the genuine thing but it took six prescriptions and wasn't any slouch of an imitation".

At another time a stern editorial demand, "Where's this week's story?", would be replied to with a whimsical note that likely as not would read:

> What you say? Let's take an evening off and strike the Café Francis for a slight refection. I like to be waked up suddenly there by the music and look across at the red-haired woman eating smelts under an original by Glackens.
>
> Peace for Yours,
>
> S. P.

By way of explaining his dilatoriness in delivering a story when due, he wrote: "Being entirely out of tune with the Muse, I went out and ameliorated the condition of a shop girl as far as a planked steak &c could do so."

Nearly always his letters would be written in his round, regular hand, sometimes in pencil, more often with ink, and generally they were signed "Sydney Porter"; but there is one in the writer's collection, typed, and signed merely with the initials O. H., that is perhaps the brightest gem of all. It was written under the following circumstances. His weekly story had been delivered, late as usual. It was "The Guilty Party", since become one of the most celebrated of his tales, describing an episode before the judgment bar. On receiving it, I wrote him to this effect:

> There was once a celebrated author who appeared before the judgment bar. A host of people were there saying nice things about him, when up spoke a weary editor and said, "He never kept a promise in his life".

In reply to this there came from him by special messenger a note which read:

> Guilty, m'lud.
>
> And yet—
>
> Some time ago a magazine editor to whom I had promised a story at a certain minute (and strangely enough didn't get there with it) wrote to me: "I am coming down to-morrow to kick you thoroughly with a pair of heavy-soled shoes. *I* never go back on *my* promises." And I lifted up my voice and said unto him: "It's easy to keep promises that can be pulled off with your feet."

And always, looking back at these letters, the sight of them reviving vividly recollections of their writer, a gentle, shy, whimsical soul, who when fame came stubbornly refused to be lionized, who abhorred a dress suit, who viewed with alarm any gathering that included more than three persons, there comes the memory of his imposing funeral, with all the pall-bearers celebrities of the metropolis, but—so the story goes,—half of them men who never had even laid eyes on the writer whose body they bore to its resting place.

Always it has seemed to me that this was a commentary, but a commentary on what, I never have been able to decide. It may have been a commentary on the greatness of New York, or perhaps on our funeral customs. I like to think it was a commentary on the greatness and simplicity of O. Henry.

And this one thing more I know—of all the joys of authorship that have come to me since the days of my acquaintance with Sydney Porter, there has been none sweeter nor more

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appreciated than that of a note from him when years ago he discovered a short story of mine in an obscure southern magazine.

"I wish *I'd* written that story," was his gallant—and I have always tried to believe, sincere—phrase.

POT SHOTS ON PARNASSUS

By Keith Preston

TITLES should be short, alliterative, disarming. A long title is likely to prove informing and, in consequence, to direct or limit the opus as a tail which wags the dog, than which nothing could be more distressing to a dog with initiative and imagination. As for disarming the reader, it is of course possible to choose a subject on which no reader will be heeled. But our subject happens to be current literary criticism, on which most readers are more or less loaded, so as to expose us to return shots from every direction. In case our pleasantly alliterative title has not been sufficiently disarming, let us further disarm by avowing that we approach the critics only as a sort of criticaster, and the poets only as a kind of poetaster, frisking and gamboling before their austere presences as the pilot fish preludes the shark or the rhinoceros bird vorspiels that formidable pachyderm.

The larger number of our American critics are general utility men, who will play any position on a moment's notice, and handle a novel, an essay, or a poem with equal competence. Such critics have our sympathy and we mention them only to give a few helpful suggestions. Cut out considerations of form. The reader cares very little about them, and that way jargon lies. The following specimen is clipped from a current literary supplement:

> What "Valhalla Corner" lacks in literary finish and pretensions to intellectual pabulum it replaces with a plenitude of skill in construction and dialogue.... Especially commendable and even remarkable in this story, is the naturalness of the dialogue. It is because the author has observed so well the manner of speech which he reproduces that he stands in small need of elaborate psychological analyses. He can almost dispense with descriptive clauses thrown in with the dialogue.

Watch for pet words, words, we mean, which have been petted to death. To say that a collection of essays is "delectable" or "just good talk" has ceased to mean anything whatsoever. Do not call a poem a "little gem" nor refer to a poet as a "facile rhymer". Don't be "intrigued" by a detective plot; say that you were all wound up in it, like the kitten with the ball of wool. Don't speak of "sheer beauty", "sheer horror", "sheer" fiddlesticks! *Sheer* is worn thin. Watch the advertising! When a word begins to wear quotes, you can write its obituary. Have your suspicions of all new discoveries in the soul of woman. Henri Barbusse has uncovered two new discoverers of the soul of woman in the last year, and Romain Rolland three in the last six months. Beware of Marie Bashkirtseff! All introspective females have been compared to her, and only yesterday we found—whom do you think?—Francis Hackett! comparing her with that *re*trospective female, Margot Asquith. You remember the little leaden saints that Louis XI wore in his hat band, so handy to take down and pray to when the fit was on him. Marie is the lead saint of reviewers. When a "soul book" comes along they reach for her. Nor is she the only one. We could name a certain prominent reviewer

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who has a whole hatful of proper names (some slightly improper) with which he conjures in every review. There's Rabelais, for instance. How many have read Rabelais?

But these are the a b c's of criticism. Getting on to what really counts in current criticism, we come to optimism and pessimism. The only thing that makes us pessimistic about American letters is the optimists. We should be hard on the present in the interest of the future. Just now criticism needs more barking than boosting, more satire than sirup. Speaking of barking, there's H. L. Mencken for whose work as a critical vigilante many of us have a growing admiration. We should like to do Mr. Mencken's portrait in a text from Doctor Caius:

> The mastie that keepeth the house must have a large and a mighty body, a great and a shrill voyce. His disposition must neither be too gentle nor too curst, that he neither fawne upon a theefe, nor flee upon his friends; very waking, no gadder abroad, not lavish of his mouth, barking without cause.

Mr. Mencken is not our only critical "mastie", nor is he infallible. He has treed some of our respected and very dear friends, and they have pelted him with ripe fruits of learning. For contrast with the critical "masties", let us again quote from dear Doctor Caius. We find him aptly defining some of the more timorous and self-effacing brothers of the pen:

> The setter is a light dog used for poaching which will not bark least he should be prejudiciall to his own advantage. When the Setting dogge hath found the bird, he keepeth a sure and fast silence, he stayeth his steps and will proceede no further, and with a close covert watching eye, layeth his belly to the grounde, and so creepeth forward like a worme.

Our critical setters are mostly employed in pointing to the great American novel.

We have reserved a little niche in our paper for the poets, whom we regard with high respect and intense optimism. We read current poetry with delight, finding more personality in a few thin little volumes than in many fat novels. These people achieve honesty and excellence, though almost without a criticism worthy of the name. In criticizing one another poets rush to extremes; they are either fulsomely laudatory or jealously hostile. In default of critics, they are mostly given over to anthologists, a strange breed of scientists who remind us forcibly of the learned experimenters whom Gulliver admired in the Academy at Laputa. Our anthologists are continually sifting and sorting through a vast quantity of lyrics, sonnets, and what not (vers libre). Their originality shows not so much in selection as in classification. Anthologists speak with awe of a colleague who has evolved a totally new classification. Thus, beside the ordinary group and period anthologists, we have bird, tree, mothers, "others", pagan, patriotic, and Kansas anthologies. Each of these is awaited by the poets with an eagerness comparable only to that provoked by the drawings in the lotteries of some Latin countries.

As regards criticism, the light-verse poets are even more deplorably situated than the heavies. Serious poets will not criticize them, regarding them, perhaps correctly, as disappointed heavies, who are all the time trying to assume poetic weight and horn into the big game. Every now and then a serious poet loses patience with the lightweights and squashes one flat. The nature of their own emoluments hardly allows the serious poets to call the bantams "penny-a-liners". But they have evolved an epithet "pun-a-liner" which is used with

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crushing effect. It has also been found effective to remind a light-verse poet of his "disastrous serious moments". The feather-weights have only one anthologist, Carolyn Wells—a capable one, to be sure, but overworked, what with more than two thousand years of vers de société to handle. Such an anthologist must prove too much for any one anthologizer.

If we have a thesis in these random remarks, it would fall into two parts: more poetry in our criticism, and more criticism in our poetry. We should perhaps add, as the most urgent need of all, more anthologists for the light-verse poets.

FABLES AND FALLACIES

By Meade Minnigerode

DO you ever buy children's books? I don't mean children's books for grownups, but grownups' books for children—well, what I mean exactly is, do you ever buy a book for a child, there.

If you do, sooner or later you buy a book of fables. And ten to one, having done so, you feel at once that God's in His Heaven, all's right with the world. A book of fables, just the thing, to train the conscience of the child—"The Fox and the Grapes", "The Miller, his Son and the Donkey", "The Frog who Wished to Become as Large as an Ox", charming, quite so. You remember having read some of them once long ago, all the old stories about tortoises and weasels and peacocks, in prose or in verse illustrated or not as the case may be, each with its little sugar-coated pill of a moral tucked away like a worm in a nut. That is what you think.

Well now, do you realize what you have done? You have placed in the hands of an otherwise right-thinking child a volume of distorted fallacies, from which to fill his mind, her mind—well, its mind then—with the insidious seeds of a smug, uncharitable self-satisfaction, founded on the discovery of good behavior as a begetter of ultimate happiness—of a prudent, cunning opportunism, deliberately practised with a view to future personal security.

You probably don't believe that; it sounds like heresy. Why, the fable is one of our best-known conveyors of moral truths to the young. "The Fox and the Grapes", "The Lion and the Mouse", "The Wolf and the Lamb", all highly moral anecdotes, and very refined. Simple, straightforward, homely, the stuff that household phrases are made of—did someone say wholesome?...

All right. Consider, not the Lilies of the field, but the no doubt highly moral fable of "The Oak and the Reed". What, you don't remember that one?

Said the Oak to the Reed:

"You poor thing, what a time you do have, don't you! Every breeze that blows is a gale to you, and you're all the while twisting and flapping around like all get out. It's a pity Nature didn't give you a little backbone, so you might stand up straight once in a while and face the winds of the world the way I do, sturdily and unafraid."

"Oh, my dear Oak," the Reed replied. "You've got it doped all wrong. I'm only too *glad* to be so flexible and wobbly, instead of all stiff and uncompromising like you. I bend, yes, *but I do not break*, ha ha!"

Now I grant you there is a touch of pride on the part of the Oak. Pardonable pride, I think on the whole.

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There he had stood for centuries, firmly rooted, a king of the forest, spreading his branches, braving the winds of the world, doing his oakly duty, a shelter to birds and a grateful shade to mankind. Not a bad sort of chap.

Turn your attention, if you will, to that whipper-snapper of a Reed. A perfect Pollyanna of a Reed, *glad* he was flexible, *glad* he was wobbly, *glad* he was not like the Oak, *glad* no wind of the world could harm him because he bent before them all. Nice fellow! Can't you hear him, rubbing his servile hands together, bowing to the north and to the south, and to the east and to the west, boxing the compass at every breath, piping his little opportunistic faith?

"I bend, yes, you bet I do, before every little breeze, in case it should turn out to be a big wind of the world and pull me up by the roots, and of course that keeps me pretty busy so that I haven't time to do anything else—but I should worry; the only thing that interests me is the fact that I don't break! When the wind of the world has gone by, and the trouble is over, there I am, as spry as can be. Bring on your winds—it's a great life if you don't stiffen!"

Let us now proceed with this highly moral fable—

There came upon a certain night a great wind out of the north, the worst of the winds of the world, and blew with a terrific fury, seeking to destroy everything in its path. The Reed, prudent pacifist, lay flat on his stomach and sang "Blow ye winds, heigho!" to himself. The Oak, proud old sentinel, stood firm to the last, breasting the storm, striving against the enemy, conscious perhaps of saplings behind him trusting in his protection, until finally the worst of the winds of the world prevailed against him, and he fell, broken at the roots.

That is the end of the fable, rendered somewhat freely, possibly.

And now, if I may ask, what is the moral of this edifying tale? A triumph of meekness and humility over obstinacy and arrogance? No. That is the moral of the fallacy.

This is the moral of the fable—

"Bend, flat on your stomach if necessary, bend before all the winds of the world, bend at every hint of approaching trouble—and then *you won't break*, ha ha!"

You can't deny it. It is simply a question of whether you would prefer that child to become an Oak or a Reed in the community.

Of course that is the end of the fable, but as a matter of fact it is not the end of the story. Oaks don't die so inconspicuously. You know as well as I what happened the next morning. At all events this is what I think—

The word went around that the Oak had fallen, and all the people of the town who had loved him for his strength and beauty, and for the grateful shade which he had given them for many generations, came forth into the forest beside the stream to see him, and wonder again at his great size, and mourn his passing.

"Poor old Oak!" the Reed kept saying. "He wouldn't bend, that was the trouble. Now look at me—it was a bad night, but I knew better than to take a chance. You should have seen *me* bend! And now here I am without a scratch. I should worry—and I told him so too!"

During the day more and more people came, and brought their children after they got out of school where they had been reading fables; and they walked around the fallen Oak, and admired him, and regretted him,

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until it was time to go home. And then a little later when they were all gone, everything was still again in the forest and beside the stream, but the Reed—oh where was he?

Trampled under foot of course, early in the afternoon! What is a Reed, when Oaks have fallen?

You are not convinced? The fable can do no wrong....

Well, here is the equally moral fable of "The Grasshopper and the Ant":

The Grasshopper, a person of small intelligence and generous impulses, having sung all summer long, found herself, shall I say, up the creek so to speak, when the northeasters began to blow. She turned to her neighbor the Ant, prosperous spinster, and begged for a grain or two from the latter's well-stocked larder.

"And what have you been doing all summer, my good woman?" asked the Ant, complacently superior.

"Singing," replied the Grasshopper quite frankly.

"Singing, hey!" exclaimed the Ant. "Well, suppose you go and dance now!" And with that she slammed the door in her face.

Oh, excellent moral, you say. Diligent Ant, useless, good-for-nothing Grasshopper. A triumph for industry and foresight, a judgment against the lazy wastrel.

Well, I don't like that Ant. Nasty, well-to-do, smug, successful little person, storing up her grains under lock and key, with never a grain of human kindness to spare.

"No child of mine shall be an actress!" That was her verdict. "Out into the storm and starve to death. Serves you right!"

Somehow, I prefer the Grasshopper, silly thing. I think that all summer long families of beetles, and little green bugs, and—and other *coleoptera,* had sat on their front porches of an evening and listened pleasurably to that Grasshopper singing away just for the fun of it, brainless little minstrel that she was.

And the Ant might have done so likewise, but she was too busy for such frivolities. Singing, indeed, and a little loafing under the stars, when there are grains to be amassed—not on your life! I expect that Ant died of dyspepsia.

In other words there be three things, and the greatest of these is Charity. I insist that there is no mention of this fact in this otherwise redolently moral fable.

And I leave it to you, which is the fable and which the fallacy? Children, fortunately, understand these things.

AT HOME WITH H. G. WELLS

By John Elliot

IN good old, merry old, wicked old England, in the county of Essex to the northeast of London, around the historic town of Dunmow, there is a little group of "literary folks" who have become famous in more or less degrees by their own efforts, and also by their inclusion in "Mr. Britling Sees It Through"—you may already have heard of this colony. There is de Vere Stacpoole, the author of "The Blue Lagoon"; the Countess of Warwick, Socialist writer and, until quite lately, Conservative land owner; L. Cranmer-Byng, who knows all about Chinese poets and poetry; Gwynne and Blumenfeld, editors of the "Morning Post" and "Daily Express" respectively (though the latter has just sold

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his old farmhouse and gone to London); and, snug and happy in an old red-brick rectory standing on the edge of Easton Lodge Park, Wells himself.

These people were dragged by the scruff of their necks into "Mr. Britling", given false names and sometimes false appearances; but they were real nevertheless. Those who know their "Britling" well will recall the strenuous games of hockey the Britlingites used to play every Sunday, and the many amusing things which happened in the course of the games. The Mr. Britling who played hockey with such energy is Wells to the life.

I think that one can get a good idea of him from two of the novels in which he has made his own experiences the background for his stories—"Mr. Britling" and "Kipps". In the first he is shown as rather a dogmatic character, full of new and wonderful ideas, short in stature, very energetic, and an atrocious chauffeur. In the second he appears as a kindly creature, continually wondering at the world and at himself, and hating profoundly the commercial existence to which he is tied down. A mixture of Kipps and Britling does not give you Wells, but it can give a mighty good idea of him. He is the least dogmatic of men, it is true, but in the other respects he has to plead guilty to writing "Wells" into these two characters.

"H. G.", as all his friends (and his wife) call him, is a small man, rather stout now, with merry eyes, short-clipped moustache, brown hair, and a high-pitched voice. When he talks he emits little coughs as though he were apologizing for what he is saying. He has a gift for making humorous remarks, very much to the point, and quite spontaneous. Wells never lays down the law. He never tries to force his opinions down anyone's throat; but when he expresses an opinion, it is always so well put, his arguments are so brilliantly conceived, and he thinks so much ahead of the people he is talking to, that quite naturally he holds the field. The sort of impression that he gives is: "Why didn't I think of it like that myself?"

But the Wells that everyone loves who sees him at Easton is the human Wells, the family Wells, the jovial Wells, Wells the host of some Sunday afternoon party. For a distance of ten or twenty miles round folks come on Sunday to play hockey and have tea. Old and young—people from down London who never played hockey before in their lives, country farmers and their daughters, and everybody else who lives in the district—troop over and bring whoever happens to be the week-end guest. Wells is delightful to them all. He doesn't give a rap if they are solid Tories, Bolsheviks, Liberals, or men and women of no political leanings. "Can you play hockey?" is all that matters. If you say "No" you are rushed toward a pile of sticks and given one, and told to "go in the forward line"; if you say "Yes" you are probably made a vice-captain on the spot.

Once the game starts Wells loses all interest in the world—peace, war, big navies, Russia, or anything except hockey. He is always captain of one of the sides, and either of his boys, Gyp or Frank, commands the other. He is the sole umpire, and he carries the whistle. Who is to blame him if sometimes his zeal and anxiety for his own side clouds his better judgment and leads him to save a certain goal against his team by one short blast?

"Foul!" he shouts, gasping for breath and red in the face.

"No! No!" comes from the indig-

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nant opponents. "Who fouled? It was a fair goal."

"Foul I say," says H. G. And foul it remains. Mrs. Wells, or just "Jane", is invariably in the defense line of her husband's side, and wild is the advice hurled at her devoted head in the heat of battle by her captain.

"Jane! Where are you? Why don't you get to the ball? Look out, he's past you. Oh! JANE, when will you learn that you must not hit the ball in front of your own goal?"

"But H. G., last time you said I ought to. You know you did."

"In some cases, yes. But you never do the right thing at the right moment." Oh, H. G., what reasoning! It is all such tremendous fun, and the whole field stands convulsed at these passages of arms between the two.

Then when the game is done, everyone goes in for tea. If it is really hot, they have tea out in the garden, and then the famous "Aunt Clatter" of the book, the movable cake and food tray, comes gaily into action. But more often than not, tea is in the dining-room, on a great oblong table, with two large teapots at each end. Mrs. Wells presides at one and any other motherly person who happens to be there, at the other. And what a tea! Apart from the buns and cakes that old and young alike devour, it is always an intellectual feast as well. Somebody will start H. G. off on any old subject, and if he is in the mood he will keep the whole party in fits and shrieks of laughter at his sallies and witticisms. He pokes fun at Lloyd George and Winston Churchill, he mimics some Conservative peer making a speech on international relations, gibes gaily at the editor of a paper sitting at the other end of the table nursing a broken shin, and carries on an intimate conversation with a little girl of eight at the same time.

I have already mentioned H. G. as a chauffeur. It is worth more than a mere mention. Do you remember how, in "Britling", with the American sitting beside him, he steers his Overland, the faithful "Gladys", into the hedge? And how he nearly kills a motorcyclist on the road from Thaxted? I assure you that H. G. knows his limitations, or he never would have written as he did!

He has a quick temper, and if everything does not go just as it should, he gets angry, rails at the car, and ends by losing his head. He is the most nervous driver you can possibly imagine. And like all nervous drivers, he has no idea of speed or distance. The bent and battered wings of Gladys bear eloquent testimony to this assertion. A short while back H. G. decided that he would like a small covered two-seater for himself, and handed Gladys over to the rest of the family, which meant Mrs. Wells, as Gyp and Frank have motorcycles. He went to London with the local engineer, and together they bought a little car with the neatest body that ever glided down an English lane. The car was of a well-known English make, with an excellent reputation except for its gear-box. It is supposed that unless you treat this part of the car with great respect, trouble will invariably overtake you.

Now the one thing which H. G. loathes is changing gear. Gladys, being American, seldom refused to go uphill on top gear, and so H. G. never got much practice at the game. But the new car was small as to the engine and required continual changes to enable it to progress on the hilly roads.

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H. G. started off from London very pleased with himself and his car, but in the crowded suburb of Tottenham, in a traffic jam, instead of putting the low gear in mesh as he intended to, he threw it into reverse. There was a grinding and a screeching, and the car came to a stop. And it moved no more that day under its own power. He had stripped the gears.

I met him the day after in Dunmow.

"That car was rotten," he stormed. "I had the engineer to tell me if it was all right, and the fool never said a word. I left the car where it was, and I've stopped my check. I treated it very gently, and the thing went bust right away."

In due course the car was mended, and the check went through. This time the local engineer drove it down to Easton, and she came like a bird, all uncomplaining. Alack! After a week of H. G. the gear asked for a holiday, and got it.

I saw H. G. a few days later.

"We can't make cars in this country," he said in a voice of scorn. "I'm going back to Gladys if this happens again."

I think "Jane" will have something to say to that.

THE BREAKING

BY MARGARET WIDDEMER

WE were weary of the petty changeless round,
Of the foolish things wherein life ended, life began,
Of all the laws wherewith our lives were bound,
In rising, in toiling, and in sleeping,
And we remembered an old forbidden altar,
And we cried on Pan:
Pan! Pan! Pan!
God of wild freedom! God of woodland riot!
Breaker of shackles! Deliverer from ordered days!
Pan of careless laughter, goat-footed, forgetful!
Pan, come from thy hiding! Pan, wake to our praise!

We heard him run, goat-footed, through the darkness,
Heard the throbbing footfalls, fevering our dreams,
Leaping past the temples of our ordered worship,
Sharp on the great roadways that our toil had builded,
Deadened on the smooth turf, splashing through the streams....
Pan! Pan! Pan!

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Pan, destroyer of temples!
Pan, wrecker of old roads, giver of strange delight!
Pan the law-breaker, guide to all forbidden!
Give thine ancient freedom! Give thy blinding light!

We leaped with him around his high-heaped altar,
Shrieking with fierce laughter, piling high the fire
With the fetters and the garments and the vows of our obedience,
Scattering the brands upon the temples whence our laws came,
Flinging aside our wise men, thwarters of our desire....
Pan! Pan! Pan!
Leaper in joy above wrecked temples!
Pan, slayer of rulers! Maker of all men free!
Rapturous all thy gifts! Wonderful thy slayings!
Perfect shall our world be, swept clear of law by thee!

There were neither roads nor houses nor temples in the dawning—
Only the scarred foundations, only the naked clay,
Only our broken bodies, shuddering in the ruins,
And a sharp-marked footprint on the smoking ashes
And our god's glad laughter, faint and far away....
Pan! Pan! Pan!
Pan, god of Chaos! Father of desolation!
Pan, maker of madness, gladdened by men's pain,
Pan, who hast given all our gifts we asked thee,
But one more thing grant us—but one boon again!

We do not ask our cities, fair again and builded,
Not our stately roadways, gullied as by fire,
Not even the far hope that some day toil may raise us
Little and lowly, shapen in sad patience,
Huts faintly recalling the cities of our desire—
Pan! Pan! Pan! Mocker of all things holy!
Pan, giver of horror, chainer of all things free!
Give us our souls again, whole and untainted!
Give us our faith again, unwrecked, unscarred by thee!

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WHY IS A PRINT?

BY FRANK WEITENKAMPF

THE print connoisseur who feels called upon to give a *raison d'être* for the print to those who may not yet have attained to a full appreciation of his hobby, is not unlikely to be met by the query, from many: "What *is* a print?" And he'll have to begin at the beginning.

A print, according to the dictionary, is anything that is printed. More particularly, it is pictorial; one speaks of calico prints, and a wallpaper may be called a print. But the word as generally applied means a picture printed from a block or plate or stone, which has on it a design engraved or etched or lithographed so as to produce reliefs or incisions or surface substances that will hold ink and will yield impressions on paper or similar material. The result is etchings, engravings, mezzotints, lithographs, and the rest, —including modern process plates. "Oh, yes", says the person-ready-for-enlightenment, who occasionally looks into art dealers' windows, "to be sure —Rembrandt and Whistler, and those fellows." Then in steps some expert eager to overcome popular prejudice against the "highbrow", and hastens to explain that prints are not only those fine and often expensive products, prints are also to be found in the magazines; yes, and in the newspapers. The comic "strip" is just as much a print as the finest etching, says he, with a sly smile of triumphant discovery. Quite true, of course— "just as much a print", from which viewpoint (that of production by printing) "Happy Hooligan" takes his place beside Rembrandt's "Christ Healing the Sick," and "Percy and Ferdie" go swimming in Haden's "Egham Lock". Yes, quite as much a *print*, but not quite as *much* a print. After all, such comparisons are an inexpensive way of proving originality, and have no more real substance than the classifying of a newspaper report of a petty larceny case with Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice".

Suppose we climb over the fence fearlessly and without prejudice, join the highbrows and see what's back of this business. Of course, we'll be open-eyed and open-minded and divest ourselves of all artistic buncombe and pose,—be just as natural and unaffected and unbiased as we are in other affairs of life. (Who says we aren't?)

Now, why is there a difference between "Keeping up with the Joneses" and an etching by Goya or Meryon or Callot? How about a counter-question? Here's a painting called "Baby's First Footsteps". Why should it not mean as much to us, or more than, Rembrandt's "Night Watch"? It hits us where we live. It appeals to motherhood and fatherhood and all the other relative-hoods. Of course it

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does. But how? It's an old truth that Professor Alfred M. Brooks has recently restated: "Again and again . . . we think we care for a picture because of intrinsic merit when, in reality, the real cause lies in some external sentiment connected with the picture." And regard for artistic merit in a picture is not unlikely to diminish in inverse ratio to the development of such sentiment.

We talk much today of "the punch" in anything that is written or pictured or said or done. But there is nothing to a punch if there is no muscle, no staying power, back of it. And that's the whole story. For a century or so that old anecdote has done duty, the one about Opie, the painter, who, being asked by a silly questioner with what he mixed his colors, growled, "With brains, sir." This stock story has its application right here in the field of prints.

Our typographical presses are grinding out all sorts of matter, fine and poor, lofty thoughts and light twaddle. The same possibilities exist in picture-printing. The presses are patient and will print impressions of the finest products of the etcher's art and the silliest bit of slick facility put on copper. Etching is so easy, so very easy,—and so hard to do well. Paraphrase that favorite war slogan, if you will, and speak of "the man behind the print". For it's just that which counts, the mind of the man who guided the needle or burin or crayon on copper or wood or lithographic stone.

That last sentence takes you into the matter of process. It's well to have some idea of that. There are handbooks which will tell you briefly about the methods of making prints, and a little reading will make things clear if the subject is new to you. But after consulting that sort of a guide-post, the thing to do is to look at prints. The more, the better; it's the only way to get acquainted.

So, now we're quite close to the main question: what is the appeal of the print? A somewhat special appeal, particularly as prints are usually in black-and-white, thus lacking the strong aid of color. We ask of a print first of all that it be well executed, that the artist understand his craft. Technique is the prerequisite, as grammar is to the writer. Moreover, it imposes its nature on the result, for every process in art—be it oil-painting or pastel or sculpture in marble or bronze-casting or etching or wood-engraving or what not—has its restrictions which the artist must respect and its possibilities on which he can draw according to his lights, and which thus form a measure of his powers. That last statement makes clear why it is well to know something about technique. But it also makes clear that technique is not all, that it is always the makeup of the artist's mind and soul that counts. It is what he has to say to us that is the important thing, and his manner of saying it. That is why, on the whole, the so-called painter-etchings or painter-engravings most hold the attention. There is admiration for the skill of a Raphael Morghen reproducing in line-engraving on copper a painting by Raphael, or of J. R. Smith mezzotinting one of the portraits by Reynolds. There are sympathy and thought and intimate understanding for Rembrandt's "Goldweigher's Field", or Dürer's "St. Jerome in His Study", or Mantegna's "Christ Risen".

The print cannot appeal by the possible big gesture of the painting in an

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annual salon. Its province is the small gallery. It arouses quieter, more repressed emotions. It invites intimate contemplation. It may lead to the magnifying-glass sort of delight in small differences in printing, the inward whoop of joy at the acquisition of the rare early state, hoarded particularly because the next collector hasn't got it. But those are after all outgrowths of a perfectly legitimate satisfaction in a job well done, a bit of printing that shows the artist's work as he conceived it at its best. "States" in the language of the print-lover signify progressive printings as the artist adds to or subtracts work on the plate. The early state may be the best and it may not. The artist has a right to be heard; and if he pulled only a proof or two of an early state and then went over the plate again because it did not satisfy him, before he proceeded to the final printing, the latter embodies his finished conception. In such a case, as likely as not, the early proofs are mainly rarities for the collector of means to gloat over. But the art-lover will delight in the good thing irrespective of state.

That is one, and an important, side of the print-lover's world. Another point is that this world of his is very much wider and more varied in its extent and production and interest than many people would think.

For about five centuries the presses have been pouring out these printed pictures—fine, good, indifferent, and bad. A mere consideration of the many lists of them that have been published thrusts upon one the obvious fact that they are pictorial documents for the history of mankind—in portraits, historical scenes, pictures of customs and costume, views of cities. In their deeper significance, the best of them mirror the changing mental viewpoint of humanity; they are a record of cultural development. As in all other forms of art, it holds good here also that art at its best is one of the finest fruits of a given civilization at a given time.

The print, the good print, the one that is really worth while, the one in which an artistic mentality worth while had its say, thus has a possibly rich and varied appeal. It will yield to you what you are willing to search for and find in it.

That's why it is,—because it has something to say to you if you will listen.

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BRIEF REVIEWS OF NEW BOOKS

SILENT, WHITE AND BEAUTIFUL, by Tod Robbins (Boni and Liveright).

The introduction wags the book. It is written by Robert H. Davis. Having read these first pages, which are an amusing conversation with an elderly man on Boston common, you are so violently prejudiced in favor of the stories, that it seems almost unfair to turn critic. However, in spite of one of the cleverest of sponsors, the horror of murder, suicide, neurosis, and what not does not always seem sufficiently to convince. If these grotesque and morbid tales were just a bit better, they might even be great! But failing of greatness, they are so "horrible" as to be occasionally funny.

DEAD MAN'S PLACK AND AN OLD THORN, by W. H. Hudson (Dutton).

With a simplicity that is characteristic Hudson retells the story of how "King Edward slew his friend and favorite, Earl Athelwold, when hunting in the forest". The character of Queen Elfrida, dignified vampire of a thousand years ago, burns like a white flame from these quiet pages. She is terrible, pitiful, entrancing. In a curious introduction, and a more curious postscript, the author avows that this story is told through "the gates of remembrance", whatever that may be. This mystic atmosphere, which seems at times almost psychic, is preserved throughout. A powerfully-told folk tale.

"An Old Thorn" develops the legend of tree-personality. For an insult to its sanctity, the spirit of the thorn hounds Johnnie Budd on to the hangman. In this story, Hudson is at his best. He moves to his conclusion with that sense of inevitability that is the core of tragedy.

THE BOY APPRENTICED TO AN ENCHANTER, by Padraic Colum (Macmillan).

"I saw the hippopotami as they lay with their backs against the crimson wall of the palace. I saw the zebras stamp between the yellow wall and the blue wall, and ostriches run between the black and the white walls.... I ran on and on, down the great avenue of palms and toward the lake where the King's blue herons flew or rested."

So Eaan fled through the Gardens of the King of Babylon.

Here is a poetic thriller for children about which one may shout. With the Celt's instinct for magician's tricks Colum has taken Greek, Egyptian, Biblical, and Arthurian tales, and made a simply-constructed patchwork of enchantment. Slender red-haired Vivien with the quick, quick hands moves through the same pages that hold the Phœnix, and Hermes Trismegistus, the thrice-great of Egypt.

REMNANTS, by Desmond MacCarthy (Dutton).

These are embroidered with many-colored silk by a fine hand, delighting the lover of preciosity. Compassion is

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the dominant thread-color, melancholy the stuff for the needle's thrust. Here are sketches of two buffoons, a music-hall singer, Voltaire, a famous circus man, Meredith, Gladstone, Samuel Butler, and others; an essay on "Tears", on the definition of "Bohemia", "Castles in the Air", and various alluring adventures of this susceptible and acute Irishman.

THE SONG BOOK OF QUONG LEE OF LIMEHOUSE, by Thomas Burke (Holt).

The perennial who-is-it pops up again in these verses: Burke or Quong Lee? We presume that it is Burke who has written and ascribed them to the young Oriental. They are for the most part charming verses in free forms. Occasionally a banality, but light and poignant sentiment in abundance, with here and there a poem that sets vibrating the cords of sensibility. In particular the delightful "Directions for Making Tea", and "At the Time of Clear Weather"—the latter seems more telling than any other poem in this slender yellow volume with the dragon cover.

THE WISDOM OF THE CHINESE, edited by Brian Brown (Brentano).

"Girls and servants are the most difficult people to handle. If you treat them familiarly, they become disrespectful; if you keep them at a distance, they resent it." So observed Confucius, and there are those who would concur today; likewise would the framers of blue laws agree with an unknown Chinese philosopher who said of woman, "Three tenths of good looks are due to nature; seven tenths to dress".

In "The Wisdom of the Chinese" Brian Brown presents an interesting collection of "moral maxims", proverbs, and poems such as this:

> A speck upon your ivory fan
> You soon may wipe away;
> But stains upon the heart or tongue
> Remain, alas, for aye.

HUNGRY HEARTS, by Anzia Yezierska (Houghton Mifflin).

These stories of the East Side reek with the aching passion of a lonely girl, and with the scent of herrings and onions. No more powerful indictment of certain phases of the immigration problem could have been penned. In "The Lost Beautifulness", this woman of the garment workers has written a really great piece of interpretative literature. The primal distrust and hate of the landlord, pride in home and family, the unanswerable despair of poverty: all these stand out in this picture of the soldier who returns home to find his mother with her household goods sitting in the street—dispossessed. Miss Yezierska's idiom is excellent. It would be a pity if she turned to a more polished formula.

THE GIRL IN FANCY DRESS, by J. E. Buckrose (Doran).

Novels are like drinks: their effects differ enormously. Some give us the feeling that life is a ponderous and solemn business; others convince us that it is a zestful adventure. Mrs. Buckrose's book belongs emphatically to this latter class. She has woven a plot in which an heiress impersonates a poor country girl; a plot recalling the comedies of an earlier generation. This theme might well act as a depressant. With it, one can imagine the average novelist vainly trying to fan his imagination into a blaze. Not so Mrs. Buckrose. She approaches her subject-matter with humor, freshness, and a rare bubbling up of whimsical

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fancy. She gleefully and successfully stands the solemnities of everyday life upon their heads.

The book is light, wholesome, interest-compelling, and refreshing.

PURITAN AND PAGAN, by Elizabeth Corbett (Holt).

"Damn women with careers!"

With which the hero of the novel proceeds to enmesh himself in the toils of the Pagan, an actress, and marry the Puritan, a painter. With New York's Bohemianism as a background, with the stage and art as color, Miss Corbett has developed her problem in an unconventional manner with all the claptrap of conventionality. Her picture will prove fascinating to those who do not know that it is not faithful. At any rate, her two women are interesting, and as for the poor gentleman, if he is a bit pale, what chance did he have against such an array of charm!

THE PRODIGAL VILLAGE, by Irving Bacheller (Bobbs-Merrill).

Senator Harding would enjoy this book. It is to be hoped that he will read it. Its suggested cure for the feverishness which has crept into American life of late years is a harking back "to the religion and simplicity of our fathers". The return to grace of a village is pictured: a village corrupted by jazz bands, modern indecorum of dress, the "movies", and irreligion.

The tale is a grave little voice amid the harsher cries of contemporary fiction. In style and subject-matter it is curiously uneven. Parts would seem to have been hastily written; pages of naive charm are succeeded by passages of sentimentality. The reader is left with a feeling of refreshment, but also a suspicion that the modern world, more complex than the world of the past, demands a more complex creed.

PERSONAL ASPECTS OF JANE AUSTEN, by Mary A. Austen-Leigh (Dutton).

This is a tenuous sort of book. With its attractive illustrations and large, clear type, it is like one of those luscious-looking but vacuous pieces of candy known to children as a "cheat mouth".

As its title implies, it gives only certain "aspects" of Jane Austen's life, and is primarily a work for those already familiar with the standard biographies, to which the reader is often —to his irritation—referred.

The writer is largely concerned in the refutation of certain misconceptions which, we are told, have sprung up as to Jane Austen's character. Now and then we catch a glimpse of the author of "Pride and Prejudice", but so much time is spent in tracing Jane Austen's ancestry, in demolishing heresies, and in a handling of the literary idol "with gloves on", that the total impression is not one of vividness.

AND THE KAISER ABDICATES, by S. Miles Bouton (Yale).

In the mind of the average newspaper reader, the events preceding and attending the recent German revolution are apt to be badly jumbled. "And the Kaiser Abdicates" is a lucidly written book calculated to supply a more orderly knowledge.

Mr. Bouton is well qualified for his task. He spent several years in Berlin as Associated Press correspondent, and was the first enemy journalist to enter Germany after the armistice.

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KEATS

(1821—1921)

BY CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

WHEN sometimes, on a moony night, I've passed
A street-lamp, seen my doubled shadow flee,
I've noticed how much darker, clearer cast,
The full moon poured her silhouette of me.

Just so of spirits. Beauty's silver light
Limns with a purer ray, and tenderer too:
Men's clumsy gestures, to unearthly sight,
Surpass the shapes they show by human view.

On this brave world, where few such meteors fell,
Her youngest son, to save us, Beauty flung.
He suffered and descended into hell—
And comforts still the ardent and the young.

Drunken of moonlight, dazed by draughts of sky,
Dizzy with stars, his mortal fever ran:
His utterance a moon-enchanted cry
Not free from folly—for he too was man.

And now and here, a hundred years away,
Where topless towers shadow golden streets,
The young men sit, nooked in a cheap café,
Perfectly happy...talking about Keats.

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FICTION IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The following lists of books in demand in December in the public libraries in the United States have been compiled from reports made by two hundred representative libraries, in every section of the country and in cities of all sizes down to ten thousand population. The order of choice is as stated by the librarians.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1. A Poor Wise Man	*Mary Roberts Rinehart*	DORAN
2. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
3. The Top of the World	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM
4. The Purple Heights	*Marie Conway Oemler*	CENTURY
5. The Valley of Silent Men	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
6. The Devil's Paw	*E. Phillips Oppenheim*	LITTLE, BROWN

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
2. The Top of the World	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM
3. No Defense	*Gilbert Parker*	LIPPINCOTT
4. A Poor Wise Man	*Mary Roberts Rinehart*	DORAN
5. The Valley of Silent Men	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
6. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1. This Side of Paradise	*F. Scott Fitzgerald*	SCRIBNER
2. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
3. The Valley of Silent Men	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
4. A Poor Wise Man	*Mary Roberts Rinehart*	DORAN
5. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
6. The Top of the World	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM

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5. The Valley of Silent Men	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
6. The Purple Heights	*Mary Conway Oemler*	CENTURY

WESTERN STATES

1. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
2. Kindred of the Dust	*Peter B. Kyne*	COSMOPOLITAN
3. Harriet and the Piper	*Kathleen Norris*	DOUBLEDAY
4. The Top of the World	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM
5. No Defense	*Gilbert Parker*	LIPPINCOTT
6. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1. The Age of Innocence	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
2. The Top of the World	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM
3. A Poor Wise Man	*Mary Roberts Rinehart*	DORAN
4. This Side of Paradise	*F. Scott Fitzgerald*	SCRIBNER
5. The Valley of Silent Men	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
6. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT

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GENERAL BOOKS IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The titles have been scored by the simple process of giving each a credit of six for each time it appears as first choice, and so down to a score of one for each time it appears in sixth place. The total score for each section and for the whole country determines the order of choice in the table herewith.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
2.	Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER
3.	Crowding Memories	*Mrs. Thomas Bailey Aldrich*	HOUGHTON
4.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
5.	Memoirs of the Empress Eugénie	*Comte Fleury*	APPLETON
6.	Roaming Through the West Indies	*Harry A. Franck*	CENTURY

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1.	Memoirs of the Empress Eugénie	*Comte Fleury*	APPLETON
2.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
3.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
4.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
5.	Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER
6.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
2.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
3.	Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER
4.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
5.	Memoirs of the Empress Eugénie	*Comte Fleury*	APPLETON
6.	The Economic Consequences of the Peace	*John Maynard Keynes*	HARCOURT

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
2.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
3.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
4.	Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER
5.	Memoirs of the Empress Eugénie	*Comte Fleury*	APPLETON
6.	The War, the World and Wilson	*George Creel*	HARPER

WESTERN STATES

1.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
2.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
3.	Roaming Through the West Indies	*Harry A. Franck*	CENTURY
4.	Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER
5.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
6.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1.	Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
2.	White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
3.	Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER
4.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
5.	Memoirs of the Empress Eugénie	*Comte Fleury*	APPLETON
6.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER

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A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

IN THE WORKER'S WORLD

By Harold Waldo

A MAN down in Cleveland set out on the most vital picaresque of a decade. It was the winter of '19. He put on a rough sheepskin coat, pulled an old hat down over his ears, and humming, "They're hangin' Danny Deever in the morn—ing!" walked the plank ...and dropped off into the underworld of the iron workers.

Penniless and friendless, in that tangled jungle he lost touch with his old self. That he had been a captain of industry with place and power seemed an illusion. He was insulted now by brutal mill police. He found children afraid of his bearded face as he strained homeward to his rooming-house at night. Cold with sweat and sore from a twelve-hour turn at the rolling mills, he set down what had happened to his feelings during the day. For his great discovery had been that it is men's feelings—rather than their thoughts—that determine their actions. He had suspected this long before; and had left his director's desk at Hydraulic Pressed Steel to learn these feelings. For men's feelings can't be interviewed out of them.

Now that he had learned how the terror of joblessness eats into a man's morale; now that he had found that Tiredness and Temper are the T. N. T. of the working world and thunder over a man's "fatigue dams" till he cannot hear the dim tick of reason, he was able to write "The Journal of An Iron Year": a book to set above Defoe's "Journal of the Plague Year" for terseness, compact energy of expression, and startling vividness.

In the railroad shops he found life the best. There wages were singularly low—for the very reason that the jobs gave rich compensation in their dignity of dealing with the power and beauty of engines. So here was the heart of another great finding: that workingmen follow not the line of least labor but the line of maximum human dignity and recognition per unit of effort. He believed then that the big problem could be solved by recognition of this wholesome law of human nature.

And with his sympathetic realization he found the gift to portray human nature with the fidelity of a great dramatist. Listen to his old derelict sailor: " 'No, never go back to Norway.... My mother—yes, to her I could talk and she understand. To brother and sister—no, not even in fine suit of clothes.... You see in all twelf' year since—in all that time—never do I say one word with good, decent woman. Something gone'—putting his hand to his heart—'something gone *here.*' "

"Steel is a great game!" says one of Whiting Williams's men. This year the dæmon of our era has called out three ambitious books. The "Steel" of Joseph Hergesheimer, with its lux-

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urious categories of silken women and other stuffs. "Steel Preferred"—Herschel Hall's panegyric of movie style supermen. And Whiting Williams's journal of steel life—"What's On the Worker's Mind". And the greatest of these by odds and furlongs is that of the man who says: "The sweat and tears...of the long days and nights among the boys of the open hearth floor...will not have been in vain if they may somehow"...increase ..."the sympathy without which knowledge seems somehow to fail to carry on."

Hydraulic Steel of Cleveland in shaping Whiting Williams has generated a catharsis for the steel world's problem. And Williams has shaped an unobtrusive epic.

What's On the Worker's Mind. By Whiting Williams. Charles Scribner's Sons.

WILLIAM JAMES'S LETTERS

By Henry A. Lappin

OF William James it may truthfully be said that few Americans have made a richer contribution than he to the national culture. In a plenary degree he had the gift of intellectual imagination and his mind was ever mobile, progressive, and responsive. So elastic and vivacious a personality could not but exert a special and vitalizing influence, and William James was believed in and beloved by many who drew upon his stores of generosity and brotherliness and sought strength at that unfailing spring of energy and of joy. His impulsive boyishness of character, his rare selflessness and guilessness, were the delight of all who knew him. He had an indubitable genius for friendship and an exquisite avidity for life in all its perplexing variety. He wrote with excellent lucidity, and what he wrote never failed to charm and stimulate even those who were least inclined to accept his central theses. It was impossible for him ever to be dull or dismal.

These letters—arranged in two comely volumes by the sure and skilful hand of William James's son—are full of wise and occasionally profound little annotations upon contemporary American life and manners. Chautauqua made him melancholy. There was "hardly a pretty woman's face in the lot, and they seemed to have little or no humor in their composition. No epicureanism of any sort.... I say unto you: 'Smooth out your voices if you want to be saved!!!'" The "enthusiasm, the literary swing and activity" of the Italian Pragmatists he met at Florence made him ponder mournfully over the "damned academic technics and Ph. D.-machinery and university organization" which effectually frustrated the emergence of such high intellectual ardors in America. He had no illusions about the alleged "moral weight" of his native country as an international influence, and declared: "Dream! Human nature is everywhere the same; and at the least temptation all the old military passions rise and sweep everything before them." Yet he loved America and bent the knee to her greatest. "I can hardly ever think of Abraham Lincoln," he writes, "without feeling on the point of blubbering. Is it that he seems the representative of pure simple human nature against all conventional additions?" And although he was sure that the blundering precipitation of the Boer War by the British Colonial office was "only outdone by our still more anti-psycholog-

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ical blundering in the Philippines", he is quick to insist that America is not as black as she is cheaply and ignorantly painted by those who point to her as the terrible example of modern political corruption. "We don't know what the word corruption means at home, with our improvised and shifting agencies of crude pecuniary bribery, compared with the solidly entrenched and permanently organized corruptive geniuses of monarchy, nobility, church and army, that penetrate the very bosom of the higher kind as well as the lower kind of people in all the European states (except Switzerland) and sophisticate their motives away from the impulse to straightforward handling of any simple case. *Témoin* the Dreyfus case!" *There* was a word that needed saying.

He was quick to record and praise the best work of his contemporaries in the field of pure literature. In the letters addressed to his brother, Henry James, there are many deeply interesting critical passages, and upon such writers as Howells, Richard Jefferies, Kipling, and Wells, his verdicts are nearly always sound and illuminating. To Wells he declares: "You're a trump and a jewel, and for human perception you beat Kipling, and for hitting off a thing with the right word you are unique...you are now an eccentric, perhaps 50 years hence you will figure as a classic." One wonders; fifteen years have elapsed since James said that, and Mr. Wells is now merely a habit. He lauds to the skies Jefferies's great essay "The Pageant of Summer", an essay of which the present reviewer had never, before this, read high enough praise. He pricks the Renan bubble beautifully when he refers casually to that writer's "sweetness and mere literary coquetry". His diagnosis of Kipling's trouble is penetratingly right: "I wish he would hearken a bit more to his deeper human self and a bit less to his shallower Jingo self.... If the Anglo-Saxon race would drop its snivelling cant it would have a good deal less of 'a burden' to carry. Kipling knows perfectly well that our camps in the tropics are not college settlements or our armies bands of philanthropists slumming it; and I think it a shame that he should represent us to ourselves in that light."

These letters will be treasured for the simple and delightful bits of self-revelation that they afford. James's life had its pathos: incessantly working, lecturing, writing, to supplement his inadequate professor's salary, he was constantly praying for leisure to think and study. His health was curiously uncertain; he suffered frequently from acute nervous tension, and then "his sleep went to pieces". But fortunately his little cottage in the Adirondacks seems to have been a never-failing restorative, the days he spent at Chocorua were among his happiest, and when he returned to Harvard he worked all the harder. Of all his labors perhaps the writing of his great "Principles of Psychology" was the most strenuous, and very moving is the letter in which he describes his sensations the day after finishing it. Long before America suspected it he was famous in Europe, and in later years it rejoiced his heart to be called a master by some of the most distinguished of the young thinkers of France and Italy. Even already, what is after all his cardinal contribution to the literature of philosophy, his work on psychology, is very far from being the last word on the subject. But William James was finer and greater than anything he wrote. Through a life that was much too full of the sort of

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toil that a lesser man could perhaps have accomplished nearly as well, James was unswervingly a force for all that was fair and honorable. We who survive him are the richer for this distinguished chronicle of an abundant life nobly planned and finely lived.

The Letters of William James. Edited by his son Henry James. Two volumes. Atlantic Monthly Press.

HEROES OF REALISM

By Robert C. Benchley

THERE was a time when, if you found yourself put down in the midst of the exotic hangings of a dankly mysterious house in Milan or in the evil-sounding market-place of Tangier, you would have been quite justified in murmuring: "Just like a story book!"

But now that the novel of the small middle-western town has come into its own, with the pace set by "Miss Lulu Bett", "Main Street", "Poor White", and "Moon-Calf", the ejaculation "Just like a story book!" will soon have to be reserved for one who finds himself in the musty front parlor of a drab frame house, looking out of a window (in which hangs a transparency showing "Fleeing from the Storm") at Culver and Heimat's Hardware Emporium across the street. Such will be, from all appearances, the setting for most novels of the immediate future.

Sherwood Anderson's "Poor White" and Floyd Dell's "Moon-Calf" are the latest important recruits in the ranks of realistic reporting, but, to a certain extent, they march backward, backward toward the gods of an elder day. True, they maintain the Underwood and Underwood photographic standard of descriptive writing, and their atmosphere is that of the same unimportant middle class which pervades "Miss Lulu Bett" and "Main Street". But in their heroes they forsake the commonplace. They are both unusual men, however usual their surroundings may be.

Hugh McVey in "Poor White" starts out being ordinary enough to suit the most ardent devotee of the mediocre. He helps the stationmaster do odd chores about the "depot" and, although at times he shows an inclination toward inventing, you somehow feel that it will never amount to anything. And to be a true realist, Mr. Anderson ought not to have had it amount to anything.

But before the story is half over, and Hugh has moved on into Bidwell, Ohio, you realize that he is going to be a regulation hero and really invent something worth while. And smash! goes the ideal of the commonplace, for a successful inventor is a character of the old school.

Floyd Dell's "Moon-Calf" makes the same concession to the past, although not to quite so great an extent. Felix Fay is not a successful inventor. In fact, he is not a successful anything. But he is not an ordinary boy by any means. He is a hyper-sensitive, nervous lad, whose confinement to the prosaic surroundings of his home town constitutes much more of a tragedy than the confinement of Carol Kennicott to Gopher Prairie in "Main Street", for Felix's aloofness was born of a genuine distinction, whereas Carol was at heart a Gopher Prairieite herself with a Sears-Roebuck education.

And Felix Fay grows up to use his brain, which would disqualify him forever from competition with a hero of

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real life. It is true, he uses his brain to bad advantage and flounders about in a maze of socialism, atheism, and free-love, bungling them all very badly, especially the free-love. But he is a superman mentally compared to the people in "Miss Lulu Bett" and "Main Street", and whoever heard of a superman in a novel which is strictly truthful?

Both "Moon-Calf" and "Poor White" have a certain vein of poetry running through them which distinguishes them from the rest of the realistic novels, and it is probably this poetic sense which would not allow their authors to have ordinary men for their heroes. They could describe the country store and the back yard and the sordid, uninteresting people who lived in the town, with all the faithful attention to minutiæ of a Sinclair Lewis, but sooner or later they just had to lapse into a little soft music and lead on a hero who was a hero.

Of the two books, "Poor White" leaves the impression of being the greater, although it is not so continuously interesting. This impression may be entirely illusory, due to the fact that there is less action in "Poor White" and a well-written book with but little action usually is more impressive than a well-written book crammed with events. You may not like it better, but you feel that you ought to, and it is the book which we feel we ought to like that we suspect must be great.

One derives a sense of incompleteness from "Moon-Calf" which is probably due to the promise of a sequel held out by the author in the last paragraph, as his hero turns his face toward Chicago. We have seen him brought up through boyhood, grammar school, and such preliminary jobs as candy making and newspaper reporting, with several intense love affairs thrown in for good pleasure; and in all of them he has shown himself to be a rather disagreeably precocious young person who gives every indication of coming into greatness later in life. Whether or not this consummation occurs in Chicago, will be a matter of interest to all readers of "Moon-Calf", for Mr. Dell's style is easy to read and Felix Fay is a young man who will bear watching.

But the realistic novel is yet to be written in which the hero is a young man of no attainments at all, who will not bear watching, and who gets nowhere. It is an open secret that there are such in this country, and some of them would make very good heroes.

Poor White. By Sherwood Anderson. B. W. Huebsch.
Moon-Calf. By Floyd Dell. Alfred A. Knopf.

A PLETHORA OF POETS

By William Rose Benét

LET me be frank about it. I don't like to read anthologies through, especially anthologies of modern poetry. I like to put them up on the shelf and occasionally dip into them. Yet I have read these through as a duty. Therefore my mind has a gorged, congested feeling. I wish certain things. I wish there wasn't so much presentation of women's vaguest emotions. I wish that I didn't know just exactly what the particular savor was going to be before I tasted a new poem by Amy Lowell, Carl Sandburg, H. D., Louis Untermeyer, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Robert Frost. I will also register a few dislikes. I dislike most modern American dialect poetry

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—not Walt Mason's, though. I particularly hate the folk songs of the native Indian. They are of course great poetry—to the Indian. I am not an Indian. I dislike flaccid, sentimental verse, whether bond or free and whether sentimental about primroses or stockyards. I will *not* buy hyacinths to feed my soul. A roast-beef sandwich can feed it just as well. I often feel vaguely teary, but object to feeling vaguely teary, and don't see why the average minor poet should so deeply *enjoy* writing vaguely teary twaddle. Such are my strictures on the volumes under review.

But it seems to me that there is a great deal of surprising technical excellence in these books, though few new things are said and there is little originality in simile or metaphor. Many thoughts and moods are expressed clearly, if not with actual power. Great power of pure imagination seems conspicuous by its absence. Accurate observation of the life around the poets, and subjective analysis, are the main strengths of all this outpouring. But very little of it is likely to remain in the mind of the future. Technique is never enough.

Braithwaite's anthology rallies the bigger names, but it contains, except for the work of Robinson and Miss Millay, nothing better, in my opinion, than Charles R. Murphy's "Stress of Snow" from the "Contemporary Verse" collection. Influenced by Frost, you may say (without meaning a pun). Possibly. Nevertheless this poem satisfies my search for sincerity, beautiful feeling, certainty of touch. I like it better than the poems by Frost himself in Braithwaite's book. Joyce Kilmer's "The Ash-Man" in the volume culled from "Contemporary Verse" is a fanciful delight—one of the jolliest things Joyce ever wrote. It has individuality. I prefer that kind of thing to poems of possibly "communal" emotion. How very rarely is the communal emotion sincere, how very often a romantic attitude or a windy myth. And how many of the old eternal emotions are constantly being torn to tatters by ladies. Leonora Speyer is even afraid now to go out into the woods in spring for fear a daisy might bite her—or something. I don't get that. When Miss Millay cries, as she once did cry, that the world was made too beautiful this year—or some year—I *do* get that. But I perceive a difference in the quality of the emotion.

It's like Angela Morgan's hailing man. Maybe she doesn't do that in these volumes. I forget whether she is represented. But others do other things of that kind. Daughters of Boreas! And Miss Teasdale will *not* stop delicately sobbing and wiping her eyes. You think I don't like women. Think again. I don't like attitudes.

Did *you* ever stop to think how many ladies—for here *are* ladies, indeed! And how many men who write like ladies? Of all the poems by ladies I liked Amanda Benjamin Hall's "Waif" best in the "Contemporary Verse" collection. It refreshed me with a certain magic. And Ruth Comfort Mitchell's heretical song of Lot's wife refreshed me with its jolt of irony. Marianne Moore's defense of certain birds pleased me, too, and I understand it—which I don't some of Marianne's. Elinor Wylie's sonnet is an early one. It possesses her characteristic precision of phrase but is more classic than her later work. The recent work she has done has gained greatly in individuality and emotional power.

In Braithwaite's anthology I like Maxwell Anderson's "Full-Circle". It

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is an excellent modern philosophical poem. I like Ridgely Torrence's song of "The Apples". It sings. Miss Millay is greatly gifted as a lyrist. I always did like Robinson, since I first read and clipped out "Miniver Cheevy". I like Masters's indictment of America—as an indictment. Alfred Kreymborg and Maxwell Bodenheim are like those Japanese pith-flowers that open in bowls of water. Winifred Welles has an indubitable gift. David Morton writes about a thousand too many sonnets. A little of Sandburg goes a long way with me. But he is splendid as a bull in a china shop, and this anthology *is* a china shop. More bulls and less bull! One thing I wish our present laureled big six in poetry would do—as well as a number of other sufficiently eloquent poets—stop crystallizing quite so obviously into their own particular styles. Louis Untermeyer has been telling me for years now that what amounts to "pep, punch, and go" is the great thing in life; and like the pessimist who saw too much of the optimist, I doubt it like hell. Amy Lowell has been splashing so much ultramarine and ultra of every other color about that, while my eyes are dazzled, my spirit is anything but fed. It isn't even fed on New England dialect, or on catalogues of *objets d'art*. There is furious commotion on the surface, but the deeps are untroubled. Robinson often need not be so elliptical. Being elliptical is a manner that may become a mannerism. Robinson can cut deeper than any of them. Often he merely does expert juggling with his surgical instruments. Lindsay is simply a genius. You can't stop him from writing an abomination right next to a masterpiece any more than you could have stopped Coleridge. It all has to come out.

So much for Buckingham! If I have not reviewed the books exhaustively and categorically it is because I find poems that really seem to me remarkable both few and far between. But I exult to stand beside the sea and hear it singing.

Anthology of Magazine Verse for 1920. Edited by William Stanley Braithwaite. Small, Maynard and Co.

Contemporary Verse Anthology, 1916-1920. With an Introduction by Charles Wharton Stork. E. P. Dutton and Co.

ADMIRAL JELLICOE POINTS A MORAL

By C. C. Gill

Commander, U. S. Navy

ADMIRAL of the Fleet, Viscount Jellicoe of Scapa, needs no introduction. Commander-in-Chief of the Gland Fleet at Jutland, and first Sea Lord of the Admiralty during the critical year 1917, he is easily the foremost figure in the naval world of today. His first book, "The Grand Fleet 1914-1916", covered the operations of the Battle Fleet in the North Sea for the first two years of the war, and described in detail the Battle of Jutland.

After this indecisive engagement the German naval plan was not to risk another fleet battle, but to operate the dreadnought force on the defensive, as a "fleet in being" to guard the German coast and hold the gates for German U-boats. The submarines were sent out to blockade England and harass the lines of sea communications which vitalized the Allied armies on the western front. This shifted the scene of the great naval drama and focused attention on the submarine warfare against commerce. Simultaneously with this change, Admiral Jellicoe was

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taken from the Grand Fleet and given his new assignment at the Admiralty which made him responsible for anti-submarine measures.

"The supreme crisis in our history", is the expression used by the author in speaking of that dark spring of 1917 when the Germans were sinking an increasing volume of merchant tonnage week by week. The history of the struggle against the U-boats is the chief theme of Admiral Jellicoe's second book, "The Crisis of the Naval War".

This book does not, however, confine its scope to the submarine phase. Broad questions of policy and strategy are explained. The author gives a balanced picture of the decisive influence exerted by sea power in the World War and points out the vindication of England's traditional policy of sea supremacy. From facts and figures set forth in clear-cut narrative by the responsible head of the great work, we learn, for the first time, details of the vast network of activities which resulted in the victory at sea making possible the victory on land.

Notwithstanding the success of their armies, German strategists at this time realized that satisfactory peace terms could not be secured so long as the Allies had free use of the seas. The German inferior fleet accomplished an important task in guarding home shores and controlling the Baltic. Without this fleet Russia could not have been isolated and overthrown. But that was not enough to win the war. To make German victory by land possible it was necessary to deprive the Allies of their use of the sea, and this was the task assigned the German U-boats. The underwater campaign against commerce was, at first, successful. England suddenly found her sea supremacy challenged by a new weapon used by a determined and unscrupulous enemy. It was a life and death struggle; for months the issue hung in suspense: finally the Allied Naval Forces, under Admiral Jellicoe's direction, began to gain the upper hand, and from then on Germany's defeat was simply a matter of time.

It takes vision to appreciate the function of sea power, and Admiral Jellicoe's book helps one to gain this vision. The author presents the facts of the situation in measured perspective, and shows the true relation between commercial shipping and the navy that protects it. He explains the method and system by which British sea power stretched out its arm to all the countries of the world, and laid them under contribution.

American man power, money, munitions, and supplies, unquestionably were decisive factors in the war; but it should be clearly understood that, had it not been for the Grand Fleet on guard in the North Sea backed by Admiral Jellicoe's Anti-Submarine Fleet, Germany would have controlled the ocean highways to Europe, and America would have been unable effectively to help her Allies in the fight.

Admiral Jellicoe has pointed important lessons which apply to the United States as well as to England. American readers will, perhaps, be somewhat disconcerted to find how totally unready their navy was in April, 1917, to take more than an insignificant part in the war. Nor is it altogether pleasant to learn how dependent the United States was upon foreign commercial shipping. But these facts affect both security and business and constitute, not a reason the less, but a reason the more for reading the Admiral's book.

The Crisis of the Naval War. By Admiral of the Fleet, Viscount Jellicoe of Scapa. George H. Doran Company.

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SEVEN PLAYS

MIXED MARRIAGE, by St. John Ervine. Included in "Four Irish Plays" (Macmillan).

MOST dramatists can sprint before they can jog, and "Mixed Marriage" by St. John Ervine may be identified as an early play by the desperate eagerness with which the author clutches for a conclusion as his vitality, his interest, and his invention begin to come in gasps. There are scenes in the play as brilliant as any which Ervine achieved later in "John Ferguson" and, better yet, in "Jane Clegg", but there is not the same sustained and steady progress to an inevitable solution of the problem in hand. The dramatist has set for himself the task of discussing what may occur when a Protestant marries a Catholic in a community of intense religious prejudices on both sides. After developing the theme with much insight and power for three acts, he suddenly avails himself of the favorite dramatic device of a stray bullet and shoots his heroine. This is, of course, grossly unfair. We cannot quite believe that the most important barrier to the success of a mixed marriage, even in Belfast, lies in the fact that one or the other contracting party will be shot. There should be some national legislation after the manner of the Sullivan law compelling dramatists to go unarmed. When the problems of a play become snarled the temptation to shoot a character is well-nigh irresistible. The actual shooting may be excused, but it is a little annoying to have the playwright step back and, pointing to the dead body, exclaim, "There's your play".

But until the bullets begin Ervine proceeds with much of his extraordinary surefootedness in the fashioning of dialogue. It has the semblance of true talk and yet it fulfils all dramatic requirements in being vivid and pointed. The sense of character is not so strong in "Mixed Marriage" as in the later plays. John Rainey is not essentially different from the familiar proud and stubborn father who figures so constantly in the drama. Mrs. Rainey is a figure lit now and again with extraordinary eloquence, but she is rather too definitely a direct spokesman for Ervine himself and this robs her a little of authenticity. This criticism hardly holds good of the play as performed in New York this season, for Margaret Wycherly built up and developed Mrs. Rainey beyond the figure which Ervine outlined on the printed page. "Mixed Marriage" is distinctly an acting play. Ervine has taken the responsibility of indicating the dialect a little too much to heart to please the casual reader. "A wondher if ye'll ivir larn anny sense? What differs does it make what religion she is, s'long as she's a good wife til him. . . . Och, man, don't talk blether." Dialect should be heard and not seen.

—*Heywood Broun*

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THE EMPEROR JONES; DIFF'RENT, by Eugene O'Neill (to be published later in the year by Boni and Liveright).

THE characters of most plays step upon the stage, not out of life, but out of other plays. Most successful dramatists are students rather of the theatre than of the world, and their characters obey the laws of the drama as it is written, at the expense of those of life as it is lived. Eugene O'Neill has kept his eye fixed not upon puppets but upon men and women, and this habit is the origin of those excellencies—such as poignancy of situation and verisimilitude of dialogue—which critics have found in his work.

Two of his plays are now running. "The Emperor Jones" is a surprising and effective tour de force, and behind the shivers which it produces is a profound psychological truth. Brutus Jones, an American negro, has gone to the West Indies. By means of a veneer of sophistication and a strain of cunning which he has picked up as a Pullman porter, he has gained an ascendancy over the other blacks and rules as their emperor. He plunders his subjects systematically and plans to flee when his spell breaks. One morning he awakes to hear beating in the distant hills the tomtom of the tribes, which have deserted him. Almost immediately, he starts across the dark forest which lies between him and the safety of the coast. Night and hunger overtake him. Under the influence of these and the incessant beating of the tomtom, he loses his way and fear begins to conquer him. Piece by piece he casts off the encumbrance of his imperial trappings, and with them goes, piece by piece, all his sophistication and all that differentiates him from his pursuers, until finally dawn finds him a naked and abject savage, ready to fall victim to the spells of the witch-doctor and to fall dead with three silver bullets through his body. By means of the admirable acting of the negro actor, Charles S. Gilpin, and the admirable dialogue of the dramatist, terror grows upon the audience as it grows upon the hapless emperor.

"Diff'rent" is as hard and definite as "The Emperor Jones" is fantastic. The plot is essentially simple. A young girl in a New England village refuses a faithful sailor lover because he has experienced, somewhat unwillingly, intimacy with a South Sea girl. Thirty years later she is a frantic old maid realizing that she has refused life, and bringing ruin upon herself and all concerned by a mad and hopeless struggle to seize the nearest man ready to make a fool and victim of her. Her tragic guilt is as definite as that of any Greek hero; it is a sort of inflexibility which will not permit her to accept things as they are. And her catastrophe grows inevitably and with ironic suitability from this guilt. Having refused a true and generous man, the ignoble compensation which she seeks is snatched from her grasp. He who will not when he may, may not when he will.

—*Joseph Wood Krutch*

HEARTBREAK HOUSE, by Bernard Shaw (Brentano).

BEFORE "Heartbreak House" was produced in New York, G. B. S. cabled word that the first night must be postponed until after our presidential elections. His wishes were revered; for G. B. S. is a reverend person. It was good publicity.

It would be amusing to see the President-elect and his former chief

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opponent at the polls, sitting in the front row at the Garrick theatre now. I should like to have a record of their mental processes as they attempted to discover the reason for Mr. Shaw's cablegram. In fact, I wonder if either of them would find any explanation at all for this amazing satire on life itself, which keeps an audience in a frenzy of laughter, and yet at the same time remains as stinging as a dose of salts. To interpret the play one must be at least Mr. Shaw himself or, perhaps, even a higher deity than Mr. Shaw. Fortunately he has always the faculty of being intensely amusing and human, even when he is inexplicable.

Here is a picture of flatulent prewar England, or America for that matter, or New Zealand, with its generation worshiping false gods and falser neurotic ambitions, glad of a chance to prove itself heroic by heads bared to air-raids and the hazards of battle. (As usual, you will find all this in the Shavian preface.) Heartbreak House in the play is the country home of an eccentric sea-captain, retired, who has "sold his soul to the devil in Zanzibar", yet occasionally seems endowed with the characteristics of the Lord of the Universe. Into his living-room come types of the heartbroken, without ceremony of introduction. Thereupon he, and his astounding daughters, strip them of their masks by the abrupt frankness from which the play derives much of its humor. The men weep a great deal, and the women swear. The dialogue—for brilliant words supply the action—bites into the mind for three long acts. Then, with a nonchalant twist, Shaw brings the loose threads of his thesis to a swift knotting by a spectacular air-raid and the explosion of a dynamite pit.

The spiritual climax comes earlier. To my mind it is the core of the play, when Boss Mangin, fake capitalist, his artifice exposed, rolls back his coat and half snivels, half shouts:

"Shame! What shame is there in this house? Let's all strip naked. We may as well do the thing thoroughly when we're about it. We've stripped ourselves morally naked; well, let us strip ourselves physically naked as well, and see how we like it. I tell you I can't bear this. I was brought up to be respectable. I don't mind the women dyeing their hair and the men drinking: it's human nature. But it's not human nature to tell everybody about it.... How are we to have any self-respect if we don't keep it up that we're better than we really are?"

—*J. F.*

DEBURAU, by Sacha Guitry (French edition, Eugène Fasquelle, Paris. Translation by Harley Granville Barker, Putnam).

IS it not strange that a play about a man who leaves his wife for a mistress, and who ends not repentant and broken, but exultant in the life he has chosen and the poverty he has achieved, should be somehow more exalting than many a prettier story of true love and final fortune? Is it not strange that the story of Deburau, premier pantomimist of a little theatre of the Latin Quarter, should be, in spite of all his faults, more moving and more ennobling than the story, say, of "The Meanest Man in the World", in spite of the fact that the latter story is overflowing with the milk of human kindness and the comfortable assurance that whoever has enough of that milk will be somehow rewarded with fortune in the end?

As Sacha Guitry's play unfolds itself

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at the Belasco, and one follows the hero from his serio-comic triumph, through the dramatic and terrible scene in which he sees his beloved slip from him, to the last act in which he hands his name and his art on to his son, one realizes that it is a good play for more reasons than its romance and its tender laughter. It is good because Sacha Guitry still has faith in the great realities of love and art, and is able to show how they justify a life, even if the art is but the art of a clown, and the object of the love one not worthy such devotion.

Sometimes the French seem cynical. In a way they are. They do not share our conviction of the angelic nature of all women or the paramount authority of the marriage vow. But they have escaped our final and devastating cynicism—the worship of success. Run over the list of Broadway hits and see with what sickening frequency the greatest hero is the man who can make the most money, and how constantly the happy ending is an unearned fortune. Therefore is it so ennobling to hear the old actor, shorn of his love and of his glory, proclaim to his son:

> This is
> The lesson I've learnt by heart,
> There are two unfading things,
> Love and Art.
> And not so regretfully
> I see them today take wings;
> I've had my share of both in a way.

Truly, it is better to lose the whole world than to lose one's own soul, and souls are lost in ways that preachers do not know of.

Granville Barker has bungled, somewhat, the translation. His rhymes are heavy and sometimes (to avoid shocking prudish American ears) he has gone wide of the author's meaning; but in spite of these defects, "Deburau" is a moving play and good literature. —*Joseph Wood Krutch*

MISS LULU BETT (Zona Gale's dramatization of her own novel).

THERE is a moment of pantomime in this dramatized story that stands out in psychological significance above any single episode in any written or published play of the year.

The spoiled middle-class child of the typical middle-class small-town family says good-night. Do you remember it? The terrible rite of the all-around good-night kiss. Bedtime has come in the midst of one of those "strained situations". You kiss dear papa, and he's annoyed. You kiss dear mamma, and she's noisily affectionate. You kiss grandma grudgingly, and she pecks at you with the dry clack of old age pretendingly hiding deepened sentiment under a cloak of ill-temper. You kiss little sister, and she sighs petulantly. If there's a visitor, you must blush shyly and submit to his embarrassed embrace, while the family smirks. It is a moment of tears as well as laughter, and Miss Gale's play is filled with both.

She has pictured with alarming faithfulness and understanding the tragi-comedy of the small-town family and the poignant starved passions of the love-denied spinster.

It is unnecessary to repeat the story of Lulu Bett, the poor-relative slavey who finds sudden happiness in marriage, and sudden tragedy in what seems to be bigamy. In both her novel, which is perhaps more sketch than novel, and her play, which is an arresting dramatic picture, Zona Gale has shown herself the skilled observer and the fine recorder of the American temperament. I once went through the château at Blois with a company of American dentists. The memory is still bitter. If they could have watched Miss Gale's Dwight Deacon, they

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might have mended their ways. It happens that the *pater familias* of this play is a dentist; but he might just as well have been an obstetrician, a brewer, a dry goods man, or a what not. He would remain a villain.

In some respects, Mr. Pemberton's production is one of the finest of the year. At any rate we no longer need Bernard Shaw patronizingly to shout across the waters that we are a nation of villagers. We may thank our stars that we are commencing to laugh at our own provincialisms—we have our Zona Gale and our Sinclair Lewis among us.

—*J. F.*

MARY ROSE, by J. M. Barrie.

SUDDENLY, through your tearful gratitude to James Barrie, you remember the intellectual who sat behind you. You are sorry that you did not, after all, twist his neck three times from right to left. For "Mary Rose" is beautiful with an unreasonable beauty, and he who interprets it and sees, in its exquisitely fantastic incident, the mere symbols of small art, somehow desecrates a holy thing.

It is the story of a girl touched in her childhood by the magic of an island in the hard-weathered Hebrides. Whither she returns, a young mother, only to disappear into some unsuggested, inexplicable place of perfect joy. Twenty-five years later, untouched by time, unconscious of the interim, she comes again to her own world that has grown old without her. What obvious meaning the play may have vanishes when, in the last scene, the miserable ghost of Mary Rose, seeking that child she has forgotten, finds him, a soldier and a man who knows her and understands and is manfully sympathetic and helpless. Finds him but does not know him. Knows only that her search is at an end.

We learn how, years since, Barrie's mind conceived the tragic happiness of motherhood; and here is this happy, heartbreaking, marvelous play, the full expression of his most personal idiom.

He has made the incredible more real and more poignant than any reality. There is a breathless, thirsty excitement from the tense prologue to the sublime end. We hear that the acting of Ruth Chatterton and her associates may not be of the best. Certainly, in the supreme moment of the return, Miss Chatterton was very fine. But the acting did not greatly matter. It were impossible, given such lines as these, not to act well enough. The play is there to carry itself, intricate in structure, simple in quality, the finest and loveliest of all Barrie has written. A play of the highest fantasy which is very like, much the same as the highest art.

—*Sidney C. Howard*

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Mr. Galsworthy's two plays will be discussed in a later number.

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THE GOSSIP SHOP

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON is now twenty minutes from the heart of New York City. New subway connections can facilitate even literary pilgrimages, and the poet is no longer so much of a recluse in the far reaches of Brooklyn. He is at work on his "collected poems", to be published sometime during the next year. It was surprising to the Gossip Shop to find a poet who really makes a business of poetry. Poetry is Robinson's life, his work, his daily meat. He sits in a room littered with books, and hung with soft landscapes painted by a friend, writes poetry, and lets the world go hang. Like Masefield, he seems a trifle austere. Dark, quiet, with a twinkle of humor now and then, he will give you sage literary opinions "not for publication". He works slowly and carefully. If you ask him for a sonnet, he will tell you that he's had one by him for weeks but doesn't know when it will be finished; that his "poetical dime novel", to be published in the spring, intruded itself, and demanded a writing. Then, perhaps, you will take a walk, while he apologizes for the hat "that is old, because it's too much trouble to buy the new". One of the simplest figures of American letters!—is this, perhaps, the reason why he is one of the most important?

James Branch Cabell writes us from Dumbarton Grange, Dumbarton, Virginia, that he does not oftener come to New York because it is such "an unlovely city".

Speaking of New York City there comes a vitriolic epistle from the middle west:

"I haven't read a New York newspaper in years: I haven't read a line of New York criticism barring Mencken's in years; I have never in my life seen the literary supplement of any New York paper or read any literary reviews in any New York magazine.

"I hold down a desk within hailing distance of a literary editor, and sometimes steal his review volumes. Most of these books are published in New York. They are fantastically worthless and obviously written by a pack of money-grubbing hacks."

Perhaps he's right!

Olive Schreiner's recent death recalls to readers of a generation ago the sensation aroused in England by the publication of "The Story of an African Farm", by "Ralph Iron". To younger readers the writer's name is probably associated with "Women and Labour", published in 1911.

Mrs. Schreiner (for so she continued to be known after her marriage in 1894 to S. C. Cronwright) was born in Basutoland, South Africa, where her father had been sent by the London Missionary Society. Among her works are "Dreams", "Dream Life and Real Life", "Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland", "An English South Af-

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rican's View of the Situation", and (*jointly with her husband*) "The Political Situation".

Burton Rascoe, formerly literary editor of the Chicago "Tribune", reports that he is on a ranch in Oklahoma finishing a novel which is "unlike anything he ever encountered".

Jack London's daughters—two of them—were recently stars of a new play. It was written by Charles Caldwell Dobie, author of "The Blood Red Dawn", and was part of the annual jinks of the California writers' club, held in Oakland in December.

We found Zona Gale one morning at a rehearsal of "Miss Lulu Bett". She was alone in the dark auditorium and we slipped into a seat beside her. Somehow, we had expected a rigid, sharp person; but instead we found a cameo-like face, soft voice, and gentle ways.

"I'd like people to feel", she told us, "that Miss Lulu Bett is a product of small-town America, not essentially of the middle west. There's very little variation in character between state and state—perhaps *r*'s sound strange, or clothes are of another cut, but the manners of a villager are much the same over the whole country."

Miss Gale, herself, is of Portage, Wisconsin, and when she satirizes the people of her native state, it is the mellow satire of a woman who knows, loves, and sympathizes with most of the characters she draws.

In the wings at the same rehearsal was Louise Closser Hale, waiting for her cue to toddle on as the fascinating and irascible Mother Bett.

"Oh! I'm Mrs. Hale, not Miss Gale, nothing but an actress," she laughed.

But the Gossip Shop pointed an accusing finger at the entertaining pages of "An American's London", and she recanted.

There will soon be a new volume of material by Joyce Kilmer, edited and with an introduction by Robert Cortes Holliday. It will contain various fugitive pieces, as well as the essays from "The Circus and Other Essays", published in the fall of 1916 and not included in the collected works. The introduction will contain excerpts from letters by Kilmer which reached Mr. Holliday too late to be published before.

THE AVERAGE AUTHOR (CHUCKLING):

Cricket-like critics in controverse libre
Debate upon what my new volume meant,
Truth, it meant nothing, but, gracious as Hebe,
Publicity brings home emolument.

Quin A. Ryan

There is no need for anyone to grow old. If you doubt it, consult the writers of a number of recent books. Dr. William Henry Porter, author of "Eating to Live Long", blames our failure to attain a ripe old age on ignorance of food. According to him:

> The sour and crabbed Carlyle is a horrible example of this ignorance.... The great Napoleon, for all his genius, proved himself the victim of his own gastronomic sins; for if he had taken time properly to masticate and insalivate his food, instead of making good his brag that he never spent more than ten minutes at a meal, he might have segregated England, instead of being segregated at St. Helena.

Dr. Robert S. Carroll offers suggestions for the reader who would make a choice between "Old at Forty or Young at Sixty". Those who would learn "how to live for more than one hundred years" should consult "Never Grow Old", by Dr. L. H. Goizet. And

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now comes Vance Thompson, of "Eat and Grow Thin" fame, whose text is "Live and Be Young". "I do not mean that I can waft you back to childhood or adolescence," warns Mr. Thompson. "You wouldn't want to go back there anyway; ... but the normal woman can carry her youthfulness with her; the normal woman and the normal man."

Persons with a turn for literary associations will be interested to hear that Joseph Hergesheimer tells us he always stops at the Algonquin when in New York.

Dear Mr., Mrs., or Miss Gossip Shop:

Replying to your kindly suggestion for December will say that Australia has been on my list for some time; and once reading public, my publishers, and circumstances agree I hope to give that corner the once over, on just such conditions as you suggest.

Very truly yours,
HARRY A. FRANCK

Sinclair Lewis writes from Washington that after the exertion of completing "Main Street", he is immersing himself in the life of the capital for the winter. Is he, perhaps, writing a realistic novel of congressional society? We wonder.

The fascination of the "crap game" seems to have won over young Stephen Vincent Benét, whose first novel, announced for early publication, is described as "a very frank story of a young man's life". Twice the casting of the ivories forms an important part in the plot. Once the game is at the gate of Heaven itself! In this connection the Gossip Shop recalls that the first time we saw Mr. Benét was when he was aged seventeen, just six years ago. His mop of light hair was obscuring his large glasses, as he "pitched pennies" on the top floor of a college dormitory.

A letter received not long ago from Booth Tarkington says: "Zest departs for a while at fifty. I'm fifty-one today and looking forward to fifty-two. From observations of old Nicholson in our native town I conclude that zest may return at fifty-two, and thenceforward grow. But the infant fifties are very unzested."

H. G. Wells, in his forthcoming book on Russia, says that Maxim Gorky's position in Russia "is a quite extraordinary and personal one. He is no more of a Communist than I am.... But he has gained the confidence and respect of most of the Bolshevist leaders, and he has become by a kind of necessity the semi-official salvage man under the new regime. He is possessed by a passionate sense of the value of Western science and culture and by the necessity of preserving the intellectual continuity of Russian life —through these dark days of famine and war and social stress—with the general intellectual life of the world."

Tolstoy the patrician in spite of peasant garb and the peasant language which he loved, is pictured by Maxim Gorky in a volume of brief reminiscences. At any attempted familiarity, "suddenly, under his peasant's beard, under his democratic crumpled blouse, there would rise the old Russian *barin*, the grand aristocrat; then the noses of the simple-hearted visitors, educated and all the rest, instantly became blue with intolerable cold".

Saphier, who has done the illustrations for an edition of "The Book of

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Jeremiah", is a small man, with a huge persistence. Working by day in a machine-shop, he paints and draws in odd moments. We wandered with him from the building on Fifth Avenue where he works to the house and studio where he paints. There was an extraordinary picture of Lola Ridge, an even more striking portrait of Max Beerbohm, some landscapes, a caricature or two. For a while we talked about art, writing, music—then Mr. Saphier went back, leaving the Gossip Shop for his machinery!

Though nobody but Mr. Strunsky and the Gossip Shop knows this, Simeon Strunsky is working on a new book. Sometimes (at our secret meetings) he tells us this is a child's book, and other times he whispers that it is about a man who got married.

Why not an anthology of famous book reviews? This suggestion is offered to enterprising publishers by W. S. Wallace in a recent article in THE BOOKMAN'S Canadian namesake. Mr. Wallace deplores the fact that a review seems to be regarded as something to be dashed off in an idle moment; and declares that nearly all the familiar types "are examples of how book reviews should not be written".

Then there is Preston Slosson in "The Independent", who classifies book reviewing into the following "schools": the Nil Nisi Bonum, which simply copies the jacket cover; the Vivisection; the Discursive; the Propaganda; the Ready Label; and the Original-If-I-Die-For-It, whose aim is to shock the reader. "The reader, if he is a born bromide", concludes Mr. Slosson, "will surely join one of the above-mentioned schools as soon as he starts reviewing. If he is an independent thinker he will create his own school and it would be impertinent to offer him advice."

A onetime "young visiter" to this country who permanently established herself here as a writer, is Kate Jordan. Miss Jordan is a native of Dublin, Ireland, who was early brought to America, where she published her first story at the age of twelve. Her novel "Against the Winds" has recently been followed by "The Next Corner", which has to do with the love affair between a young American wife in Paris and a Spaniard of noble birth.

How pleasant it would be to have sport for a vocation and writing for an avocation! That seems to be Donn Byrne's approach to life and work. He hurried into the Gossip Shop the other day, decked in a rough brown suit, a flannel shirt, a belted coat. He announced breathlessly: "I've sold two polo ponies, and I'm leaving tomorrow for the south to play golf!" We accused him of being more excited by these events than by the sale of the motion-picture rights to "The Foolish Matrons"—and he acknowledged that he was.

From New Orleans comes word of a new magazine called "The Double Dealer". Its editors are a group of young men not long out of college, and they boast an unpublished manuscript of Lafcadio Hearn for their first number, as well as a list of names that, if the facts develop the promise of the announcement, should bring their fledgling sheet wide attention.

Keith Preston can teach Greek in Northwestern University, tell you he has the best job in the world, and yet preserve one of the keenest wits and most fiery pens in the middle west.

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The Gossip Shop watched him in action recently with amazement. He can skip from the classics to Mencken with simian agility, and touch each with a finger of satire. Of all the columnists, perhaps, he has the broadest background, and the keenest perception. We don't know just what his future plans are; but he tells us that teaching a Greek class is his pet vice, that when he confronts the faces of a group of undergraduate toilers through a Greek verb, he forgets everything else and becomes intoxicated by the joys of classical syntax! However, he doesn't forget to turn out some good light verse. Maybe we can expect another volume of that, before he graduates many more Greek scholars.

Whiting Williams was not contented to observe labor conditions with the eyes of a mere reporter. He spent seven months at hard labor in steel mill, coal mine, and what not, in the way of hard grinding toil. The result was "What's on the Worker's Mind", and another period of hard labor; for he has recently addressed eleven chambers of commerce, ten national organizations of manufacturers, and carried on his regular courses on the management of labor in the Harvard Business School.

William Chislett, Jr., of the University of Idaho, finds W. L. George's remarks in the November BOOKMAN on American literature "interesting but full of errors". Apparently the two gentlemen need to be introduced. We'd like to be present. Mr. Chislett's differences are, in part, as follows:

To say that Emerson, Hawthorne, Irving, Longfellow, and Whittier were "really English in spirit and thought" makes an American smile. Let Mr. George read Hawthorne's "English Notebooks", Emerson's "English Traits", Irving's "Legend of Sleepy Hollow", "Knickerbocker", or "Dolph Heyliger", Whittier's "Snowbound" and his abolition poems, and—yes, I dare say it!—Longfellow's "Hiawatha" and "Evangeline", and maintain, if he can, that these writers were not very American. If he had named Poe he would have come nearer the mark; and even Poe is American, in his criticism.

Then, ye gods! he fails to find Mark Twain American! "I do not care for, and I would not include him in the forces which helped to establish a basic literature of your nation," says he. Above Mark Twain he places William Dean Howells. Mr. Howells, who was a just and sensitive critic, would not have agreed to that....

Mr. George also asks us to swallow this: "There is more truth in one story by Ambrose Bierce than in all O. Henry"! Like Bierce, I am a Californian; but that is too much. Bierce was a genius, almost of the first water; but O. Henry and his work are more: they are an American and American life in a good-sized nutshell. Bierce plays a tortured string compared with O. Henry's broad bowing. And finally, Mr. George has only a "knock" for James Lane Allen, most of whose fine work is a credit to us.

On the other hand, I haven't the least hesitation in agreeing with Mr. George that the work of Frank Norris, Jack London, and Theodore Dreiser is highly important and intensely American. But why does he forget to add a word on Whitman, Joaquin Miller, and the renaissance of American poetry?

The Gossip Shop and its entire family recently spent some seven mornings sitting in a courtroom under subpœna, waiting to testify that its apartment had been robbed. Grudgingly, therefore, it recounts the conception of Natalie Sumner Lincoln's plot for "The Red Seal". The Gossip Shop conceived no plots—it contracted only a cold—a mere incident in the "crime wave". However it seems that Miss Lincoln on the first day of May happened to be in her kitchen when the iceman called with the daily supply of ice and his company's bill. Instead of paying him by check she did so with cash, and then forgot the incident until a deputy-marshal of the district served her with a summons to appear in the police court as a material witness. The iceman, it seems, had ap-

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propriated the money to his own use. As she was the only person who had secured a signed receipt from him, her testimony was required. "And", Miss Lincoln says, "it was while waiting in the police court for the case to come to trial that I conceived the plot of 'The Red Seal'; and before I left the court room I had planned the opening chapter."

Almost any time of day that you may drop into the Sunwise Turn Bookshop in New York, you'll find Alfred Kreymborg there—and Mrs. Kreymborg, too. They have returned from "mandaluting" their way across country. Mr. Kreymborg regaled the Gossip Shop with tales of his wild wanderings; for he has been playing the minstrel to the coast and back, and he has high hopes for the literary future of America. Of all free-verse poets yet encountered he seems to us the most broad-minded. In his gentle way, he has ambitions for creating a theatre of his own, where he can gather together representatives of all cults, creeds, and cliques of writing, and make them talk to each other, hit each other, like each other. We'd like to see such a house. We wonder, would it be a playhouse or a madhouse?

In spite of the fact that Joseph Lincoln lives part of the year in a New York City apartment, and swings a long black cane when he goes walking, he cannot fool the Gossip Shop! There is something in the twinkle of his blue eyes, the ruddiness of his somewhat round face, and the general bearing of his short figure, that speaks of Cape Cod. "Galushah, the Magnificent", he tells us, is the name of his next novel, and Galushah—it doesn't look like the right spelling—was really an old chap who lived somewhere down in Pennsylvania and wrote things years ago. The hero of the novel, however, it goes without saying, is of the Cape itself, sufficiently fishy.

Felix Fay, the hero of Floyd Dell's "Moon-Calf", is to grow old and develop in the bang and whir of Chicago. That is, he will grow through the pages of the sequel to "Moon-Calf". The Gossip Shop tore Mr. Dell away from novels and the editorial duties of "The Liberator", for a half-hour. Slight, a little shy, and with a fine sense of humor, he made a confession. "Don't tell them", he requested, "because I still like to think I'm shocking someone, and I still like to think I'm one of them; but the younger generation takes away my breath. Why! When I read F. Scott Fitzgerald, I went to the mirror and looked at myself to see how many hairs there were left, and said, 'Good Lord, can it be you're getting middle-aged!' "

The publication of W. N. P. Barbellion's "A Last Diary" will recall the storm of interest that was aroused at the time of the appearance of his "The Journal of a Disappointed Man". Many critics insisted that Barbellion was H. G. Wells, and refused to be convinced even when Mr. Wells denied outright that he had written the book. In his preface to this last volume of the trilogy, Arthur J. Cummings tells the strange story of his brother Bruce Frederick Cummings (Barbellion's real name). He was a native of Devon, it seems, the son of a district representative of a country newspaper. The victim of a terrible and incurable disease, his life was a struggle against his own body, and the self-introspections of his soul. All this is reflected in the writings. He lived to see the publication and success of his first

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book. It comforted him greatly. There was a very fine courage about the man. Mr. Wells says the story of his life is a "recorded unhappiness". His brother prefers to think of it as a "sovereign challenge". The work remains as one of the literary curiosities of our time, with a style and a viewpoint that seems unique.

A Jack London Memorial Library at the novelist's home near Glen Ellen, California, as a rendez-vous for western writers, is the project of the Martin Eden Club, the latest of the many writers' organizations of the state. The club is an interesting one in its inclusions and exclusions. It will consider for membership only those who write, yet any who attain to a place where they support themselves by their pens can no longer retain membership.

Column-conducting is the pleasantest job in the world. So attests F. P. A., in his preface to C. L. Edson's "The Gentle Art of Columning". And the recipe is easily followed:

> Given a set of morning papers, any child able to frame a coherent sentence and to rhyme in simple couplets, can begin to write a column. In a day or two, the public will begin to help him; then he is an editor and a conductor, and the public does most of his work for him.

Do you love Art? Then here's a great chance to Serve the Cause. An advertisement in the September-December number of "The Little Review" reads thus:

> WANTED
>
> Has any reader or friend of "The Little Review" a Typewriter in good condition which he is willing to donate to the cause of Art?
>
> Life is very difficult for one of our contributors.

We hope that when you go to bed at night you are able to say: "Today I have loved Art."

January 4, 1921.

Dear Mr. Gossip Shop,

I do not know who the Mary Blair may be who is annoyed by my using the phrase "a child might eat jam in my lap" in my serial "Break-Over", recently published in "The Woman's Home Companion". But I assure her, and those who may have read her letter in the January G. S., that, cross my heart, hope to die, I didn't get it from Rhoda Broughton, because I have never read a line of Rhoda Broughton, and know nothing about her save that she was a popular English novelist, and that one of her novels bears the colorful title "Red As a Rose is She". But then, I am a very inadequately read person.

The phrase in question is used as semi-slang by a number of people I know, and has been so used for years. I had no more feeling that it ought to be quoted, or attributed, than any of our more recent, and perhaps more flavorous phrases, such as "I'll tell the world", or "You tell it, goldfish, you've been around the globe". Nor did I feel that in including it in my serial I was pretending that it was my own, any more than if I had used the two others just quoted, of which I hereby modestly and wholly disclaim the authorship, lest someone else pounce upon my ignorance. It seemed to me something perfectly well known, in general use, and *not at all remarkable, in any case. I hope* that this letter will appease Mary Blair, and not seem to the Gossip Shop "much ado about nothing". (N. B. This last is from Shakespeare. You see I really am willing to give credit when I know there is an author.)

SOPHIE KERR

The Gossip Shop is glad to print this letter from Mrs. Underwood because it is a case in point of the vexed question of attribution. It is almost too easy to find parallels and virtual duplications in idea and structure which have no real connections; and when it comes to the employment of phrases and expressions, as distinct from the substantial wording of a page or chapter, the English vocabulary would be robbed of a common coinage if one foolishly set out to tag every apt expression that has become current speech. To the creator belongs the glory, but to the language, the phrase. And while it is commendable to store one's mind with such lore that all these origins are familiar, it is far better to use the phrase without knowing whence it came than either to

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know it only as a tagged exhibit, or not to use it at all.

The Gossip Shop was once caught up in what promised to be a sensational suit. It involved the use of a famous American writer's story in play form—unconsciously the defendant said, with malice aforethought, the plaintiff insisted. It was the first experience the Gossip Shop had ever had in the matter of plagiarism; and we have never forgotten the testimony of six of the ablest critics and experts who were almost unanimous in their opinion that while the facts were curious, it was quite possible for the duplication to have occurred innocently. And they had numerous instances in their own experience, fully as remarkable, to bear them out.

Since that adventure the Gossip Shop has a very open mind on the subject of the "deadly parallel"; and it seems to us that certain writers and critics who like to fasten on resemblances of various degrees and kinds not only do a frequent injustice to honest authors, but tend to create a false impression about the property rights in the English language. After all it is for use—and the more the best is used, the better.

Many interesting facts concerning the poem "'Twas the Night before Christmas", have come to light since the publication of the article in the December BOOKMAN relative to the authorship of the famous rhyme. It has been discovered, for instance, that the poem was first printed in book form in 1836 and not 1844, as stated in the article; while a letter written in 1844 to Dr. C. C. Moore by Mr. Tuttle of the Troy "Sentinel", credits Mrs. Daniel Sackett with being the person who first gave the poem to that paper in 1823. The most important contribution to the evidence in the case, however, is a statement made to Casimir deR. Moore on December 23, 1920, by Maria Jephson O'Conor, which is a connecting link in the chain between Dr. Moore and the composition of the poem. Mrs. O'Conor's statement is as follows:

> Clement C. Moore married Catherine Eliza Taylor, sister of my grandfather, Elliot Taylor. My late father, Colonel Henry V. A. Post, married Maria Farquhar Taylor, daughter of my said grandfather. Under these circumstances my father became very well acquainted with Mr. Moore. My father told me Mr. Moore himself related to him the following circumstances under which he came to write the poem entitled "A Visit from St. Nicholas":
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> It was Christmas Eve and Mrs. Moore was packing baskets of provisions to be sent to various people in the neighborhood, as was her custom. She found one turkey was lacking and so told her husband. Though late, he said he would try and get one from the market.
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> On his return from the market he was struck by the beauty of the moonlight on the snow, and the brightness of the starlit sky. This, together with the thoughts of the holiday season, suggested to him the idea of writing a few lines in honor of St. Nicholas.
>
> He told my father he immediately went to his study and wrote the poem. Mr. Moore also told my father that when he came to publish the same, with some of his other poems, he only made two slight changes in the lines as originally written by him.

The acquitted murderer or baseball hero who eventually takes to the stage, has ceased to be a novelty. But a writer who adopts this career is rather a matter for wonder. Ernest Thompson Seton is now touring in a woodland vaudeville act in which he tells stories of his experiences in the wilds.

Another member of the craft who has been lured by the footlights is Dorothy Stockbridge, whose first book of verse, "Paths of June", appeared last year. Miss Stockbridge not only acts in, but writes and produces the delightful plays given several times during the year by that "non-commercial" New York company known as "The Stockbridge Stocks".

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